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The primary purpose of this paper is to present the concepts of time and time-reckoning of a semi-transhumant, Arabic-speaking tribe of western Morocco, the Bni Batfu.[1] Although Bni Batfu temporal concepts correspond largely with those held by urban Moroccans, I have chosen to deal primarily with the Bni Batfu so that the contrast of my analysis with anthropological accounts that have been predominantly geared to “simple” societies is more sharply delineated. A complementary goal of this paper is to assess the theoretical implications of the shift in attention to complex and “part” societies for the anthropological study of time.

*** Time in “Open” and “Closed” Societies

The starting point for the study of time remains the assumption by Durkheim and his colleagues that categories of time, like other concepts basic to a person’s perception of reality, derive from the rhythm of social life and are necessarily collective (Durkheim 1915: 10–11, 440–441; Mauss 1966; Hubert

1929; Durkheim and Mauss 1963). In these investigations, Durkheim and his associates concentrated upon relatively undifferentiated, small-scale, and closed societies because their study seemed to carry more promise of revealing the “primitive and simple,” and therefore most “essential,” forms of social phenomena (Durkheim 1915: 3, 6).

Much more attention has been given to the ambiguous use of “primitive” to mean both “earliest” and “simplest” in Durkheimian sociology than to the implicit distinction between “open” and “closed” societies which it also contains (Lukes 1973: 456) and which is central to my ensuing discussion. “Closed” societies have been defined as those in which there is “no developed awareness of alternatives to the established body of theoretical tenets” because ideas in such societies are presumably closely bound to the realities that occasion them (Horton 1971: 230, 236). Closed societies are typically nonliterate and their contacts with other societies are limited ones which do not have the potential of engendering profound shifts in the symbolic order.

In contrast, there is a developed awareness in “open” societies of alternatives to established ideologies. Such societies are commonly, although not necessarily, associated with cultural heterogeneity and at least partial literacy.

Once the distinction between these two types of society is stated, it is easy to see that most anthropological studies of time have dealt with “closed” societies. Perhaps the most elegant empirical articulation of this approach in English is Evans-Pritchard’s (1940: 94–138) account of Nuer time and space (cf. Mauss 1966). Later studies of concepts of time among black African tribes have generally been analogous to Evans-Pritchard’s approach, although they more clearly depict native awareness of European influence, including exogeneous European systems of time-reckoning (Bohannan 1967: 322; Middleton 1967).

There are several anthropological accounts of concepts of time in complex societies, but only in those societies capable of being discussed as if they were closed. Outstanding among these is Pocock’s (1967) incisive account of

how perceptions of social change among Hindus are reconciled with their cosmological assumption of the immutability of the caste system. Other studies frequently describe only “traditional” or dominant temporal categories for such societies, even if alternative, competing sets of categories exist (e.g., Geertz 1966: 64–66, 68–71). Bourdieu’s (1963) discussion of the temporal categories of “traditional” Algerian peasants exemplifies this latter approach.

Bourdieu (1963: 55) writes that he is concerned with temporal concepts as they presumably existed prior to intensive contact with the West and the colonial situation. Yet his account primarily concerns contemporary attitudes and repeatedly refers to many of the nontraditional situations in which peasants have found themselves, not the least of which was the war for Algeria’s independence (Bourdieu 1963: 58, 68, 70–72). Bourdieu’s main purpose in shifting the focus of his presentation to the past is apparently to make more plausible the claim that “everything holds together” in Algerian peasant society. Such an assumption allows him to ignore alternative cultural categories and the impact of “exogeneous” influences (assuming that it is meaningful in the case of Algeria to delineate what is exogeneous and endogeneous). Both “traditional” and “modern” ties between nonpeasant Algerians and peasants and the effects of these ties are likewise neglected. Bourdieu achieves descriptive elegance by treating the temporal categories of Algerian peasants as if they were closed, but at the expense of disregarding issues that cannot be immediately reflected in local social structure.

Bourdieu appears to treat Algerian “peasant” society as if it were closed so as better to place his material within the fold of Durkheimian sociology, a strategy also employed in an early paper by Beidelman (1963) on the Kaguru. It can Eerhaps be argued that the Kaguru have only recently become an open society, ut such a tenet is chimeric for North Africa: sustained and necessary economic and ideological contact between tribal groups and urban centers have occurred for over a millennium. Any attempt to account for the categories of thought employed by members of such societies must take into consideration their knowledge of alternative, coexisting forms and practices, even if these are invested only with minor significance. The idea that “everything holds together” in such societies is decidedly inadequate. This is so even in the case of relatively isolated (at least traditionally), largely

nonliterate tribes such as the Bni Batfu. Besides, such narrow formulations of the problem of time and timereckoning evade some of the more interesting issues. The bald statement that temporal categories are related to social structure is no longer new and is less interesting than exploration of the more precise nuances of their interrelationship, especially in the case of open societies.

*** Time-Reckoning and the Bni Battu

Like most tribes of North Africa, the Bni Baftu cannot be represented as a cultural or social isolate. They are, and have been in the past, articulated economically, religiously, and politically with a larger, nontribal society. In this paper I consider the Bni Batfu a “part” society. Thus, the core of their temporal concepts are nonabstract and tied closely to other aspects of local society. In this respect, their temporal notions differ in emphasis from those held by urban Moroccans. Yet their recognition of alternative temporal notions and other social forms means that the Bni Baftu cannot be analyzed as a closed, simple society. Moreover, certain of their key temporal concepts, especially those concerning the “present,” are shared with urban Moroccans.

As of 1970, the Bni Batfu numbered approximately 10,000 people, located on the Tadla plain at the western foothills of the Middle Atlas mountains. The nearest major town is Boujad, which serves as both a market and religious center for the Bni Batfu and neighboring tribes. In many ways these tribesmen are highly “traditional,” provided that this term is not taken to imply genres de vie that have remained frozen over an indeterminate period. The Bni Batfu still live from the combination of transhumant pastoralism of mixed herds of goats and sheep and the seasonal cultivation of wheat and barley. In 1900, an estimated 93 per cent of Morocco’s population predominantly followed these genres de vie. As of 1970, 70 per cent of Moroccans were still rural, indicating the continuing importance of the rural, tribal population, although there is no reliable estimate of the number of these that remain transhumant (Noin 1970: I, 215; II, 100). The Bni Batfu are almost entirely illiterate, although a few send their children to town to live with friends or relatives in order to be apprentices or to acquire an education.

Communication with the town on other than market days is difficult, especially during the winter transhumant months. Yet most tribesmen frequently visit relatives and neighbors who have settled in Boujad and elsewhere. Many have performed military service. Emigration has accelerated since Inde- Eendence, but since at least the last quarter of the nineteenth century it had egun to be common, at least for impoverished tribesmen. Sustained and necessary, even if not always intense, contact has been maintained with urban centers and other tribes through participation in markets, the festivals (musem- s) of regional marabouts, and other patterns of activity.

Cultivated land in the tribe is located on the Tadla plain. It is owned by individuals, although it may be sold or exchanged only with other tribesmen. Personal ownership of agricultural land is “traditional” in that it existed prior to the French Protectorate in 1912. Grazing lands for the winter transhumant months, roughly late September through May, continue to be collectively owned, with usufruct officially assigned to each of the five “sections” (fakhda-s) of the tribe. These lands are in the forested foothills (ghaba) of the Middle Atlas mountains. Government restrictions of the colonial and post-colonial periods have attenuated the reciprocal exchange of grazing rights with Berberspeaking tribes and sections. Until the 1930s, a complex array of personal and collective agreements determined such movements. The imposition of a purely collective assignment of grazing rights was a colonial innovation.

Each section of the Bni Batfu is in turn composed of from three to eight “local communities” (clawwar-s). There is an official total of thirty-eight local communities for the entire tribe, but the number recognized by the tribesmen themselves fluctuates significantly over time. Each local community ranges in size from roughly two hundred to five hundred persons. Local communities are not ordered in any formal segmentary hierarchy of social identity.

Local communities do not collectively exercise formal control over agricultural lands or pastures. However, their component households, or

tents (khayma-s), undertake certain collective ritual and practical obligations. To a large extent, participation in the fulfillment of these obligations determines daw wav membership. During transhumance, members of a local community herd together and camp in the vicinity of one another. Traditionally their tents were aligned in a circle, the literal meaning of dawwar, within which the herds were kept at night. During the rest of the year, all but the most impoverished of the Bni Baftu reside in stone and wattle dwellings located on their agricultural lands. There are no villages in this region.

Transhumance takes place in the fall, after the early (bekrt) planting of the fields. Some tribesmen return for a second, late (maw) planting that usually takes place around January. Herds return from the mountains and their foothills in the spring, although they are kept from grazing on the cultivated fields until after the harvests of May or June.

The timing of this cycle is highly variable because of the seasonal and microecological vagaries in climate and rainfall (cf. Mauss 1966). Further important considerations are government zeal in enforcement of restrictions of the entry of herds into the forest, market conditions, the size of herds and the number of personnel available to each household unit, and the adequacy of forage and water at different stages in the annual cycle.

Tribesmen conceive of the succession of seasons as a cyclical unit, although they speak of it in terms of recurrent concrete events, not as an abstract entity that comprehends them. For most tribesmen, the year is divided between winter (shta, lit. “rain”) and summer (#/). Spring (rbi’j and autumn (khrif) are seen as intercalary, transitional periods between the other two. Knowledge that the succession of seasons will occur is a matter of certainty, but the quality of each of these seasons in regard to personal and collective prosperity is not. Nonetheless, tribesmen look to various natural and social signs to determine when to plant and how to manage the size of their herds. Among the natural signs they seek to interpret are those thought to indicate whether the rains will be late, the winter severe, or the summer exceptionally hot and dry. Among the important social signs are those reflecting market conditions and the timing

of Muslim feast days in relation to the solar year. To use Bourdieu’s (1963: 61) useful distinction, these determinations are considered foresight (prevoyance) and not forecasting (prevision). Foresight involves calculation, an evaluation of potentialities that tribesmen see as embodied within the horizon of the present and actual. In contrast, forecasting involves conjecture, the anticipation of one of several mutually exclusive possibilities and the assumption of “regular” outcomes for actions initiated in the present. Forecasting is thought by the Bni Ba((u and other Moroccans to involve the declaration of knowledge about the shape of the future, which is considered God’s knowledge (‘ilm Aljah) alone.

For the Bni Batfu and other tribes of the upper Tadla plain, the festival (musem) of the marabout Sidi Mhammed Sherqi, whose shrine and descendants are in Boujad, marks the onset of fall planting and winter transhumancy. Since the ecological situation of each client group varies slightly, their pilgrimages (zyara-s, lit. “visits”) are staggered over roughly a month, from mid-September to early October. The exact timing follows seasonal conditions, not any formal calendar. By then, their cultivated land has been used as forage by their herds for several months and has become dry and barren. Each group that makes the pilgrimage to Boujad says they do so to renew their “covenant” (‘ahd, bay’a) with the Sherqawa. In exchange for sacrifices of sheep and bulls, and gifts of animals and grains, the Sherqawa make invocations (da’wa-s) invoking the aid of their ancestor, Sidi Mhammed Sherqi, and certain of his prominent descendants so that the affairs of their clients may prosper. Until the 1930s, the Sherqawa gave clients at least part of the seeds they used for planting; they no longer do so but invoke blessings (baraka) over the seeds that tribesmen bring with them.

The succession of seasons is used only for a very limited range of timereckoning. Tribesmen speak of “this winter,” the “coming winter,” and “the one that has just passed,” but only rarely are events reckoned that are further distant. In any case, seasons are thought of as inseparable from the social activities characteristically associated with them, such as harvesting, threshing, the move to winter pastures, the division of herds in the spring between herders and the townsmen who often contribute part of the capital for them, and visits of the Sherqawa seeking a “share” in the name of their ancestor at the division of the herds and at harvest-time (weqt le-

faacf)- Beyond the immediate sequence of the one preceding and the one following, these events are regarded by tribesmen as discontinuous islands, meaningful primarily as landmarks of concrete experience but not as markers of the regular passage of time.

The same is true of recurrent social events unconnected with the agricultural and herding cycles. They mark but do not measure the passage of time at shorter intervals. Especially important among these is the cycle of weekly markets. Each rural market in Morocco is named for a day of the week and a social group regularly associated with it, such as “the Sunday market of Bni Baftu” (s-suq /- had dyal Bni Battu). Until thirty years ago, markets in rural areas were held every day of the week. Most Friday markets were suppressed by activists in the nationalist movement who saw symbolic value in Fridays being considered analogous to the Christian day of rest. One market in each rural cycle—Boujad in the case of the Bni Battu—is larger than the others and in turn forms part of a larger cycle linking the major urban centers of the region. Time-reckoning in terms of the days of the week does not come easily to most tribesmen. They usually pause and reconstruct how many days have elapsed since the last market or remain to the next. This is the case even though all the days of the week except Friday (yum j-jem’a, “the day of the gathering”) and Saturday (yum j- sebt) are simply numbers in sequence. For instance, Sunday is “the first day” (yum l-keddY Monday is “the second” (t-tnayn), and so on. The days of the week are simply not used for counting. Instead, they are merely seen as islandlike markers of the social, political, and economic activities associated with them, especially those tied to the market. Without clarification, tribesmen often confuse mention of the days of the week other than their own market day with the markets of neighboring tribal groups and towns. Time here implies a social and spatial differentiation with neighboring groups.

Only within a limited horizon does the market cycle give definite temporal shape to some social activities. The “last market” and the “coming market” are frequently heard phrases, but only rarely is any more complicated reckoning based on markets.[2]

On a smaller pattern, the day is seen to be punctuated by the five daily prayers obligatory to all Muslims, but not always practiced. Their performance is calibrated to the position of the sun. These are the prayers of dawn (l-fajr), mid-day (4-$hur), late afternoon (/-krr), sunset (l-maghreb), and a final “supper” prayer (l-‘asha), technically supposed to be performed when twilight disappears. In town, these prayers are fully integrated into the rhythm of social life; the opening and closing of shops and other daily activities are often regulated by them. In the countryside, the timing of the prayers is fully known by men, although they are only performed by a few persons. A pious tribesman in nearly every (jawwar assumes the role of prayer-caller (mwezzen). Similar to the use of market days for time-reckoning, the daily prayers and the positions of the sun associated with them are not seen as regular, countable progressions. To borrow a term from Nilsson (1920), experience of them is point-like (punk- tuell). The daily prayers are seen as related to each other but are not seen as orderly divisions of time that can be used for counting. Instead, they are concrete experiences.

Events are sometimes remembered as occurring “before the sunset (prayer),” “at dawn,” or “just before the market,” but they are not ordered in a more abstract chronological sequence. Events like “Ahmed’s death,” “the famine,” “the day the airplanes chased us,” “before the Makhzen (government) came,” “the sunup,” “Hammu’s wedding,” and “when Sharef was small” are points of experience meaningful to those who share them and are capable of being sequentially ordered. But such sequences are largely unintelligible to outsiders since they can be translated only awkwardly into lineal concepts of time or related at least to more general shared experiences. The same is true of events in personal life-cycles, such as birth, circumcision, marriage, and death. There is a marked sexual dichotomy in the ability to effect translations into lineal time, for the time of women in general, especially rural women, is even more personal and is anchored by fewer experiences that are shared by wider circles of persons.

Although they reckon time primarily in terms of concrete, shared experiences, the Bni Batfu are familiar with two sorts of calendar time, the Julian solar calendar and the Muslim lunar calendar. The Julian calendar is not known by its formal name and is assumed by tribesmen and townsmen alike

to be identical to the Gregorian calendar used by many government and business offices. Of the two calendars, the Julian calendar, or at least the months indicated by it (yennayer, yebrayer, mars,, yebril, mayu, yunyo, yulyuz, ghusht, shtanbir, ktuber, nuwambir, dujanbir) is known by all tribesmen. However, the use of both the Julian and the Muslim calendar is limited to certain specialized contexts. As might be expected, the Julian calendar is regularly linked with the agropastoral cycle and the seasons of the year. Thus, when tribesmen are asked to explain l-lyali, the period reckoned to be the coldest of the year, they say it is the forty days that fall from late December to early February. The same is the case for s-ynayem, the corresponding forty day period of hot weather lasting from mid-July to late August. The Sherqawa musem in Boujad, as mentioned, is not determined by the solar calendar month, but the Bni Batfu say that it “always” occurs in September, translating its occurrence roughly into calendar time. Westermarck (1926: II, 159–207) reports a number of periods of the solar calendar considered to be especially propitious or dangerous, but the usages he describes are not current on the upper Tadla plain.

The Muslim lunar calendar is less known in detail to most tribesmen but is socially more significant since it determines a number of important feast days; Ramadan, the month of fasting; and the period of the pilgrimage to Mecca, an occasion more significant to townsmen than to the Bni Baftu. The lunar year begins with Mufiarram, on the tenth of which occurs a feast called ‘ashura (lit., “the tenth”). In towns, ‘ashura is widely celebrated and money is distributed to the poor to mark the occasion. This is in contrast to Ramadan, during which the fast is as widely observed in the countryside as in town. During this month, there is a total abstinence from food and drink, except for small children and those whose health would be endangered, from approximately an hour before daybreak until sunset.

Of key significance is the timing of the feast that marks the end of Ramadan (‘Id alt. “the Little Feast,” ‘Id e^^ghir) and the “Great Feast” (‘Id le- Kbir) that occurs in the last month of the lunar year. There is a gradual regression in the relation of the Islamic feasts with the agricultural and pastoral cycles because the lunar year is only 354 to 355 days long. Over a period of thirty-six years, there is a complete cycle of intersection between the two. Although tribesmen are not aware of the

technicalities of this intersection, they are aware of its occurrence and strive to adjust their economic activities to it. Because every household able to afford the sacrifice of a sheep or goat does so at the Great Feast, and to a lesser extent at the Little Feast, the price of sheep and goats increases significantly at these times. When these feasts occur during periods of the year when forage is difficult, tribesmen are hard pressed to maintain their animals until the time of optimum sale. For those able to do so, the rewards are great. The less fortunate must sell early to middlemen at significantly reduced prices. Although vitally concerned with the periodicities regulated by the Muslim calendar, tribesmen do not reckon time by it. It is not used to provide measured intervals of duration, although many tribesmen recognize that both the lunar and solar calendars can be used to do so. Ages, for instance, are rarely known in the countryside because they are not used to determine hierarchies among persons except in a general way. This is in contrast with our own and urban Moroccan society, where classification of persons by age is a prominent feature of systems of formal education. Technically, all Moroccans now have their ages recorded for the Etat Civil. Since the 1950s, new births have been registered in a fairly exact manner. For older generations, the ages officially recorded are more approximate and in any case are not in themselves regarded as socially significant. The increasing efficacy of military conscription, among other mechanisms, may rapidly alter this situation.

Calendar time and clock time are known by tribesmen to be important in some contexts, but the remembrance of things past depends only marginally upon measured, linear patterns of time-reckoning. For occasions such as court cases, which require dates to assess the legality of land transactions, claims for support, marriage and divorce, and inheritance disputes, tribesmen are capable to some degree of translating events into a framework of calendar time. A few tribesmen are considered especially capable of doing so. These include the more wealthy tribesmen and those who under the Protectorate or the independent government held official sinecures. In addition, some tribesmen are literate. These especially are capable of making the appropriate translations into calendar time. This was true even prior to the Protectorate. The Bni Batfu, like other tribes, had Qur’anic teachers (fqih-s) live among them to teach their children the rudiments of the Qur’an. They also sometimes wrote documents for tribesmen. A few of the Bni Baftu had even gone to the Qarawiyin mosqueschool in Fes, although only the less successful returned to

the tribe. In general, men who have ambition and who are successful are more aware of formal, calendar time and the nuances of its passage. Time is experienced as more discontinuous and repetitious by those forced to assume client roles and other dependency relationships (cf. Mannheim 1952: 251).

Still, the translation into linear, calendar time is effected more awkwardly by tribesmen than by townsmen. The latter are more accustomed to translate from clock time, “Christian” (rumi, “Roman”) work weeks (Sundays, not Fridays, remain the weekly holiday in most Moroccan government offices and schools), and intervals imposed by the Muslim calendar.

*** The Past and the Present

So far I have argued that the Bni Ba^u conceive events temporally in terms of sequences of irregular, island-like concrete experiences. They are aware of formal, abstract concepts of time. Even though these formal concepts have a significant effect upon their economic and social life, they only peripherally make use of them. Like townsmen, their everyday concepts of time have been traditionally affected by temporal concepts bearing only indirect relation to local social structures; in recent years this “pluralism” has further intensified. In this section, the more profound concepts of the past, the present, and the future held by the Bni Batfu are described and related to the social order.

The Bni Batfu, like other Moroccans, divide time into three broad concepts, the content of which shifts significantly from rural to urban, and from literate to nonliterate milieux. The most basic of these notions is the present, most commonly referred to by tribesmen and townsmen alike as “the way things are” (had sh-shi Ui kayri) and “our time” (l-weqt dyalna). It is characterized by a certain engaged consciousness toward events and is regarded as more “real” than other categories of time. Conceptions of the past (bekri, lit. “early;” ta’ ta’rikh, “belonging to history”) are more variegated and are not shared by all Moroccans. Finally, there is “the future”

(l-mustaqbel\ events that are only potential and fall in the realm of God’s will. This is not a category as emphasized by Moroccans as the division between the past and the present.

In all societies there is a constant apprehension of persons entering into and leaving the “paramount reality” of daily life. To paraphrase Geertz (1966: 43), awareness of this movement—of one’s colleagues and oneself as “perpetually perishing,” the influence of the completed lives of the dead upon the uncompleted lives of the living, and “the appreciation of the potential impact upon the unborn of actions just now being undertaken”—provides a key source of a sense of temporality. Schutz (1967: 15–19) classifies fellow men into his well-known ideal categories of predecessors, contemporaries (those who live at the same time as ego but do not come into direct contact with him), consociates (with whom ego has direct and sustained social contact) and successors. Drawing upon both Schutz and Geertz, Lawrence Rosen (1972: 441; 1973) argues that if the Balinese culturally perceive other persons primarily as stereotyped contemporaries with whom more intimate, consociate contact is considered as accidental, then Moroccans in contrast see all men bound together in a “chain of consociation.” In other words, even if Moroccans do not have intimate face-to-face relations as consociates, they assume that such contacts are necessary for meaningful social action, even though such consociation may occur only through a contrived set of intermediaries.

This emphasis upon consociation or potential consociation has important implications for the horizon of the present as conceived in Morocco. The present comprehends the range of fully known or potentially knowable social action that is considered to have an effect upon current or immediately forthcoming social action. The horizon of the present is the domain in which men contract and sustain bonds of obligation (^?<y) with each other. Having an obligation “over” other persons does not guarantee that they will conduct themselves in the desired way, but it implies that they will be morally constrained to reciprocate through culturally approved means. The web of multiple personal ties constructed by these obligations is said to symbolize “closeness” (qar,aba). “Closeness” carries contextual meanings which range imperceptibly from asserted and recognized ties of kinship, factional alliances, ties of patronage and clientship, and common bonds developed out of residential propinquity (Eickelman 1974; 1976). Provided

that persons act as if they are in a significant relation of closeness with each other and are able socially to maintain this assertion, then closeness is said to exist. As particular projects succeed or fail, men revalue their social ties. The provisionality of the cosmos is legitimized and accepted as natural through the concept of God’s will (qodret Allah). The phrase “if God wills” (in sha Allah) accompanies any statement of intent; the notion of “that which is written” (l-mektuh) attenuates metaphysical speculation on the outcome of events. Attention is focused instead upon the exact, transient differentials in wealth, ability, power, and status among particular men in concrete situations.

The horizon of the present can best be delineated by examining two crucial issues of social identity : the means by which “closeness” is maintained through the assertion of common descent, and patterns of naming.

The claim of common descent necessarily involves the delineation of predecessors. In both urban and rural milieux, general questions about the significance of the dead often invoke the summary judgement that they are removed from the social arena; their influence in it is terminated. “He who is dead has gone away” (lli miyyet msba). Such an aphorism conceals the fact that the social influence of some of the dead continues to pervade the present. I have elsewhere given an account in an urban setting of how residents of a quarter enhanced their claims to social honor by effectively acting as if they were “close” by common descent claimed through a wealthy deceased merchant who built an impressive series of houses for himself and his sons in the quarter (Eickelman 1974: 289–293). A similar process occurs among the Bni Baftu and other rural groups, where common ancestors are remembered primarily as a means of asserting a desired status in the present. In most cases among the Bni Batfu, this means a constant genealogical depth of three generations. Genealogies serve primarily as conceptual grids, parts of which can be utilized to construct and to legitimate contemporarily significant social relationships. Genealogical knowledge is not maintained for its own sake except when there is a specific advantage in so doing. Even among those townsmen claiming descent from the Prophet Muhammed (shorfa) or from marabouts, such as the Sherqawa of Boujad, few persons possess any significant depth of genealogical knowledge. This lack in no way weakens the legitimacy of their claims of descent, since this is achieved primarily through the role these

persons play in contemporary society. In fact, it is considered improper directly to inquire into a person’s antecedents unless they are already known to be prestigious.

Local communities among the Bni Batfu claim unity among themselves and with other local communities through agnatic common descent, but at the same time recognize many ad hoc exceptions to this. Men “with word” (‘andhom kelma\ also l-kobbar, “the big ones”), especially those recognized as spokesmen for local communities, sections, or tribes during the Protectorate, are capable of manipulating such ties and imposing their definition of social realities upon others. Ordinary tribesmen generally are incapable of tracing such claims of descent. They are aware that there are many ways of claiming closeness other than asserted agnatic ties. What counts is comportment in times of crisis and fulfillment of the multiple ties of obligation shared by members of local communities and other social units.[3]

The shape of the present as a temporal category is also clarified by patterns of naming. Moroccan names are composed of the following elements: (1) personal names, such as Muhammad, Afimed, and Buzkri; (2) nicknames (laqab-s), generally relating to some predominant personal identifying feature, e.g., “the one-eyed,” “the fast one;” (3) names of occupation and origin; (4) patrifiliative names; and (5) “family” names (konya-s), made obligatory by the government in the 1950’s, but earlier maintained by wealthy government officials, merchants, marabouts, and shorfa (H. Geertz 1974). Depending upon social context, persons can be identified in several alternate ways. Here I concentrate only upon the temporal aspects of patterns of naming.

First, in the giving of personal names, there is no normative expectation that they reflect anything of the relation of the child to earlier generations. Quite a few names are chosen by chance or simply reflect the time of year that a child is born. An infant born near ’Id 1-Milud, which commemorates the birth of the Prophet, frequently is given the name Miludi. Similarly, one born near ’Id le- Kbir will often be known as le-Kbir. Clearly, names chosen at random or for the time of birth reflect nothing of the relation of a child to earlier generations. However, in both rural and urban areas a child’s name may

reflect the fact that he is a replacement for a deceased predecessor of the same sex. A child often will be named after an admired person among his immediate relatives who has recently died. Thus the name of a deceased father’s brother or paternal grandfather (only rarely matrilateral kin) is often bestowed upon a newborn infant. The father’s name is bestowed only if the father died before the birth of the child. Naming a child after a living person is considered an evil omen and is therefore not done. Another frequent situation in which replacement naming occurs is when a child is born whose elder sibling of the same sex has died in infancy or early childhood.

Patrifiliative names by definition provide a more significant temporal link. In a name such as Ahmed weld Hammu, for example, the word weld (the more formal ben is less commonly used in rural areas) indicates “son of.” Such a name indicates that part of a person’s identity comes from a predecessor or elder contemporary. Only rarely, however, is more than one patrifiliative link indicated, as when the paternal grandfather’s personal name is also added, as in Afimed weld Hammu weld l-’Arbi. Occasionally, a mother’s name is added as a sort of nickname, especially in the case of plural marriages. In all cases, a patrifiliative name (or in a few cases a matrifiliative name) at least initially situates a person in the social world by linking him to his immediate predecessors. Children and young adults are commonly referred to only as someone’s child (e.g., weld Ahmed, bent [“daughter of”] Zohra, weld le-Gezzar [“the butcher’s son”]) until with maturity their own social identity becomes distinct. The key feature of patrifiliative names is that while ideally they are unbounded and Moroccans often will claim that they can be extended infinitely into the past, in reality they rarely extend further back than two generations.

Bni Ba^u tribesmen rarely carry a family name or konya. The government has required all persons to possess them since the 1950s, but these are generally referred to as Makhzen, or government names. Some illiterates have to ask other persons to read their “government” name for them, so little are these names a part of ordinary social contexts. However, the Bni Battu know of konya-s. For instance, Hasan ben l-’Arbi esh-Sherqawi indicates Hasan, the son of l-’Arbi, of the maraboutic Sherqawi descent group. For reasons explained earlier, “Sherqawi” is a prominent and highly respected konya on the western plains of Morocco and has been so for a considerable period. Although they do not possess

konya-s proper, the names of groups with which tribesmen claim affiliation are used in a similar fashion. Identifying himself to a stranger, a tribesman might say that he is Kbir weld Sayfi 1-Fqicni 1-Battiwi (”Kbir, Sayfi’s son, of the Fqi^na local community of the Bni Battu”). The section name— which in this case happens to be Wlad (“sons of”) Khellu— might also be added in some circumstances. But since tribes are not formally segmented into “levels” and do not act in terms of segmentary lineage organization, there is no orderly pattern in such usage. As Hildred Geertz has argued at length, names are primarily the attribute of actual persons, not abstractions from which persons gain their identity. The names of actual groups such as local communities are shared names for which the name-bearer is one of a number of concrete persons. The name-bearer is not seen “metonymically as a representative part of an objectified whole” (H. Geertz 1974: 64; cf. Mauss 1966: 400- 4°3)- .....

As a basis of social identity, names primarily signify actual persons, not abstract groups or genealogical “lines” with an extended temporal reality. The very structure of possible ways of naming a person ensures that the temporal depth is markedly attenuated, further focussing attention upon the quality or efficacy of comportment within the horizon of the present.

*** Horizons

So far the term “horizon” has been employed in a commonsense manner. Gellner (1971:159–161) provides a useful typology of the sorts of horizon that societies can have. For the sake of clarity, I have rearranged his typology slightly so that it has three components rather than his original four. They are: (1) the horizon is either naturalistic or discontinuous. If naturalistic, there is really no horizon at all, for there is no break assumed between the past and the present, as in our own linear conception of history. A horizon is discontinuous when, for instance, at least part of the past consists of a mythical epoch. Further, discontinuous horizons can be either simple or ramified. If simple, a mythical past is directly juxtaposed to the present. If ramified, there is at least one intermediate stage. The latter is the case for the Bni Batfu. (2) The second component of the typology involves members of the society possessing or not possessing a sense of history. If they do possess such a sense, their past is cumulative and forever growing. If they

do not, the past tends to be ahistorical and to remain constant in size. Evans-Pritchard (1940: 108) reports a dramatic case of the latter for the Nuer. They pointed out to him a tree standing in their midst said to have been planted at the time mankind was created. (3) The final component of the typology involves the recognition or nonrecognition of different patterns of social structure within the “natural” (i.e., nonsupernatural) part of the horizon (Gellner 1971: 160–161). Gellner is primarily interested in his typology as an expression of ideal types. My own emphasis is its use in clarifying ideas of time in a society that possesses several alternative temporal concepts.

Although there is considerable agreement between tribesmen and townsmen on the nature of the present, this is not the case for conceptions of the past. The greatest difference is between literate townsmen and illiterate tribesmen of the older generation. Educated townsmen conceive of the past as naturalistic, possess a sense of history, and recognize different patterns of social structure. Tribesmen have a discontinuous, ramified conception of the past and are ahistorical in their perception of it. They are aware, however, of alternative notions of the past held by townsmen. Younger tribesmen and illiterate townsmen fall between these two extremes.

For most tribesmen, the term bekri refers to a temporal category in which events occur that affect the social order but whose full social context is not known. It is a ramified concept, at least from an etic point of view. Its first use is transitional from the present. Although events that happened “early” are not known in their full social context, they are implicitly assumed to resemble in form those which occur in the present. This “transitional” use of bekri is shared by many townsmen as well.

In a second usage, bekri refers to an atemporal horizon in which uncanny events occur and certain persons, marabouts, are attributed with powers and the ability to perform acts that have no parallel in ordinary social life but which nonetheless determine some features of the present-day social order. These events are related in myths that are known to tribesmen and to traditionally oriented townsmen. Often this period is also referred to as ’‘the age of the first ones” (l-‘ahd dyal l-uwwelin), or of the marabouts. The fullest versions of these myths are recited to tribesmen by the descendants of Sherqawi marabouts who sustain covenants with

tribesmen. In the “early times” of the myths known to the Bni Ba^u and other tribal groups of the region, the marabout Sidi Mhammed Sherqi (who actually died in A.D. 1601, although this is not known to tribesmen and is not relevant to the way in which they conceive the past) calls upon the tribes to settle the land, limits the exactions that sultans can make upon their subjects, brings Islam to specific groups of the Tadla plain, and demonstrates his unusual powers by such feats as transforming birds into men (see Eickelman and Draioui 1973).

Most significantly, tribesmen regard these myths as representing the circumstances in which covenants were first established between themselves and the Sherqawa, and regard their maintenance as essential to their wellbeing and prosperity. Through the annual renewal of the covenant, tribesmen “remain connected” (bqaw mtesjlin} with the Sherqawa, benefit from their mystic powers, and maintain the link between “early” times and the present. As a corollary to this concept of “remaining connected,” the principal Sherqawi marabout, Sidi Mhammed Sherqi, and certain of his maraboutic descendants are considered to be “alive” in their shrines. Otherwise, as tribesmen say, it would make no sense to address invocations to these marabouts or their descendants or to sacrifice and make offerings to them. In this manner, the social present affects the shape of the past, since myths related to specific marabouts drop from sight as the marabouts they refer to are thought to lose their powers and hence their ability to command sacrifices. The subtleties of how a marabout can be considered “alive” does not concern tribesmen. They do not seek to interpret the myths that legitimate their ties with marabouts; these myths simply exist and for tribesmen are part of the accepted fabric of the social world. The socio-logic that they contain concerning the relations between men and between marabouts and men similarly is not a matter for reflection.

For tribesmen, this mythical past is a constant distance from the present: it neither expands nor grows more remote. Some tribesmen, asked by me to locate these events on a linear time scale, responded that they occurred immediately before the “days of the Christians” (ayyam le-n\ ara)_y as the period of French rule (1912–1956) is commonly known. Such attempts to translate bekri as mythical time into lineal time simply indicate how divergent the two concepts are.

The other use of bekri, as an intermediate category between the mythical past and the horizon of the present, refers generally to events of which some presentday consociates have had personal, lived experience or have been in contact with persons who have. Like the present itself, the boundaries of “early” used in this sense vary with groups and individuals. Included in this category are the establishment of ties of milk brotherhood (tata), which are pacts of nonaggression and mutual support between local communities and sections of tribes. Such alliances existed prior to the Protectorate and during its early years. The time period in which such alliances were actively maintained has been directly experienced only by the most elderly tribesmen. For most younger tribesmen, the existence of such alliances in the past is peripheral to the present-day social order. They think of them only as preceding the present and not in an historical context.

Bekri in this intermediate sense is also used to categorize more recent events such as the aerial strafing conducted by the French after the major tribal uprisings in the region in 1955. The Bni Batfu were at the margin of the zone of French retaliations. Most of them merely think of the event as happening “early” and do not even link it with other national political events. On the other hand, the neighboring Sma’la tribe bore the brunt of French punitive actions, and Sma’la tribesmen recall the event quite vividly. It created major political shifts that resulted in the significantly improved fortunes of some tribesmen and the rapid fall of others. For the Sma’la, then, the uprising of August 1955 and its subsequent repression is still within the horizon of the present.

Another feature of bekri is that it is constituted by events not clearly ordered in relation to each other. Within the horizon of the present, what is important are the salient points of personal power or events that significantly shape the social order. To a certain extent temporal order thus directly relates to the social order. As events become less meaningful for current social action, they lose their temporal order and are considered to have occurred “early.” For some, bekri is commonly also a period when there was a minimal difference between the normative order and what men supposedly did. Thus it often has a more positive value than the present.

Formal education and literacy have had a significant impact in transforming conceptions of the past. For many townsmen and a few tribesmen among the Bni Baftu, the heroic “early” age of marabouts is not taken for granted or regarded as a meaningful representation of reality. Such persons simply regard marabouts as particularly pious Muslims and consider myths concerning their heroic attributes as no more than tales (khesla-s) intended for the ignorant and gullible. For such persons, “early” concerns naturalistic, even if not fully known, events. Marabouts still can be acknowledged to have played significant and even prestigious roles in the past. Maraboutic activities like all others are thus conceived as “belonging to history” (ta’ ta’rikh}’, the past no longer is over the horizon and events which occurred “early” have the potential of being placed in chronological order. In fact, ta’rikh comes from a root that means literally “to date.” Even if “history” is used only in specialized ways, as in recording land transactions or in schoolboys learning the dates associated with the rulers of Morocco’s dynasties and major national events, all activities within the local social order also become potentially datable.

Literacy necessarily entails a vision of the past alternate to that directly attached to the local social order. The past, or at least a specialized part of it, becomes detached from immediate social context and is seen as continuously expanding. This is in marked contrast to the “closed” world of older tribesmen. For some, history becomes cumulative. A rural schoolteacher once explained to me his conception of a chronological scale by which the “advancement” of civilizations could be compared. At certain times in the past, he saw Muslim civilization as significantly more advanced than Christian (i.e., European) civilization. At the present, he hazarded that Muslim civilization was perhaps three centuries “behind.” The unstated criteria by which the schoolteacher made this temporal evaluation of civilizations and “progress” are not central to my argument. To some degree, of course, his notion of macrohistory was idiosyncratic. But the underlying conception of the past as a fixed record is also paramount in traditional Islamic learning, as is the idea of placing a value upon different temporal epochs (e.g., before and after the arrival of major prophets, especially Muhammed). As different in detail as is the traditional, scholarly Muslim vision of macrohistory from that of a rural schoolteacher, both visions are

cumulative and historical. In these features they radically contrast with the closed tribal visions of the past.

Gellner (1961: 1) writes, “The way in which time and its horizons are conceived is generally connected with the way [a] society understands and justifies itself.” In the Moroccan case, this set of understandings is a complex one, even in the tribal milieu. Tribesmen are aware of concepts of time other than those they find adequate for everyday life and dealings among themselves, even if they cannot fully understand or make use of such alternative concepts. To a certain extent these plural notions of time have coexisted among them over a long period, although it is reasonable to assume that in the past tribal society tended to be more closed than in the present. Prior to the nineteenth century the “shocks” of consciousness, to use Schutz’ (1967: 231) term, that brought into question the adequacy of the accepted, implicit concepts of time appropriate to a more closed society were relatively few. Recent economic and political transformations—the increasing importance of the cash economy since the late nineteenth century, the consolidation of central government hegemony during the period of the Protectorate, recent legislation (not yet implemented for the Bni Batfu) to convert all land to individual ownership with no restrictions on its subsequent sale—are rapidly eroding traditional social forms. These traditional social forms are inseparable from the closed socio-logic of bekri as understood through maraboutic myths. Even among the Bni Batfu and other groups, it is unlikely that these myths and their underlying concepts of temporality will survive this century, except as ethnographic texts. As they disappear, so does the unreflective acceptance of the concept of the past that these myths represent.

There is now underway a major transformation of concepts of the past in which some elements of the traditional pluralism are rapidly disappearing. Replacing it is a pluralism that is consciously elaborated into a system. What is striking, however, is the continuing homogeneity of attitude towards the present as a “paramount” reality, shared by townsmen and tribesmen. Differences emerge only in the subuniverse of meaning and experience, in which certain activities or types of events are governed by their own special rules for the measure of time (cf. Schutz 1967: 207–259). The least complex combination is that of older tribesmen. The most complicated is that of educated persons. For those who have received a western style education,

the future is still rhetorically spoken of as God’s will. But there is a special, bracketed category of activity that allows for the planning of budgets, work, lessons for schoolteachers, and other projects that “date” the future and presume a knowledge of its shape, just as written history to some extent fixes the patterns of the past. For all of society the subuniverse of meaning that is constituted by “bookish” conceptions of history is increasingly creating a “shock” with commonsense notions of the past. Shared understandings remain, but the anthropological insistence that “everything” must fit together has constituted an obstacle to their perception and description.

*** Conclusion

Bni Batfu concepts of time-reckoning are tied closely to their perception of shared social events, as was indicated by a consideration of how they use the succession of seasons, weekly markets, prayer-cycles, the Muslim and Julian calendars and incidents in their experience as temporal markers. The Bni Batfu are aware of abstract concepts of time but make little use of them, although such concepts (e.g., the determination of feast days by the Muslim calendar) have a significant effect upon them.

Conceiving the Bni Baftu as part of a more complex society is particularly useful in discussing their conceptions of past, present, and future, and the “horizon” of what they conceive to be the present. Their idea of the present, centered upon the notion of “closeness,” is largely shared by urban Moroccans as well. It is in conceptions of the horizons of the past and the future that significant differences emerge between the Bni Baftu and urban Moroccans. Because of Bni Batfu awareness of alternative temporal conceptions, their ideas of time cannot be comprehended solely in relation to the local social order. Nor can their conceptions of time be treated as if they were immutable.

A Durkheimian search for elusive “simpler” temporal forms directly related to the local social order is inappropriate for both “part” and complex societies. More useful is a Weberian or Marxian framework with its emphasis upon regarding societies as internally differentiated groups with at least partial

divergences of ideas and interests. Such an approach has been implicitly applied in this paper. Weberian sociology shares with the Durkheimian tradition a concern with discerning the logico-meaningful fit of the underlying, shared assumptions about reality held by members of a given society, but insists that these assumptions must be seen in their historical context. This means that the “fit” between these ideas and the social order is never perfect. As ideologies, implicit (such as most concepts of time) or explicit, cross class or status lines, or are simply used in novel situations, they often change in emphasis and direction. Conversely, ideologies affect the goals and activities of the groups and persons that adhere to them or take them for granted (Weber 1968: 486–518; Mannheim 1952: 276–320). In such a Weberian framework the description of the relation between ideas and the social order may be less elegant than those possible within a classical Durkheimian sociology, but they have the advantage of being applicable to open, historically known societies in which cultural forms must be regarded as in a process of becoming rather than as fixed, as well as to those societies that have been characterized as closed.

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[2] In towns throughout Morocco, Fridays, like market days, are sharply distinguished from other days of the week. Most adult males gather at noon at the principal mosques where a sermon (khutba} is read. Thus there is a symbolic correspondence of space and time for the duration of the congregation. On the upper Tadla plain nearly every tribal local community has at least a hut (nwala) that serves as a mosque, but Fridays are not similarly observed.

[3] The explanation of “group feeling” (‘a^abiya) of the North African protosociologist Ibn Khaldun (d. 1406) clearly recognized the focus on current social notions of descent as opposed to fixed ‘‘genealogical” conceptions of it. He stresses the importance of effective communal social action over abstracted notions of “real” genealogical descent: “When the things which result from common descent are there, it is as if (common descent) itself were there ... (I)n the course of time, the original descent is almost forgotten” (Ibn Khaldun 1958: 267).

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Until 1996, six years after the publication of Muhammad Shahrur's Proposal for an Islamic Covenant, his sense of public was as austere as that expressed by Immanuel Kant in his famous essay on the Enlightenment. Kant argued that the printed word, unlike direct speech, offers the 'public' the possibility of judging ideas independently from the status or authority of their authors. Muhammad Shahrur acknowledges his lack of credentials in Islamic scholarship. Despite this deficiency, his courage in entering an arena of public discussion, previously reserved for trained jurists, has incited strong interest in his ideas among many educated speakers of Arabic throughout the world.

Muhammad Shahrur at his Damascus office, PHOTO: DALE F. EICKELMAN

March 1996. Born in 1938, Shahrur attended primary and secondary school in his native Damascus, and was sent to Moscow at the age of nineteen to study engineering. He returned to Syria in 1964, but left again in 1968 to study for MA and PhD degrees in soil mechanics and foundation engineering at the University College in Dublin. Upon his return to Syria in 1972, he became a faculty member at the University of Damascus, from which he retired last year.

*** Shahrur in Arabic: thick description

His first book, al-Kitab wa al-Qur'an: Qira'a Mucasira (The Book and the Qur'an: A Contemporary Interpretation),[1] immediately became a best seller in 1990. The first printing in Damascus sold out in three months. By 1993, sales of the authorized editions published in Damascus, followed by Beirut in 1992, totalled nearly 30,000 copies. To these figures must be added the thousands of photocopies circulating in countries where the book was banned, such as Saudi Arabia. By 1994, an attractively produced pirate version had appeared in Cairo. In addition to his first book, Shahrur published two sequels in 1994. A fourth book, concerned with jurisprudence related to women, including inheritance, appeared in 2000.[2] Together these four volumes total approximately 1,600 pages daunting even for dedicated readers. The first book received numerous reviews and newspaper commentaries. It also generated works opposing Shahrur's interpretive approach and challenging his authority, usually on the basis that he ignores centuries of established jurisprudence and commits errors of interpretation.[3] Shahrur responds in kind, explaining that he has chosen to continue articulating his comprehensive project of interpretation rather than engage in time-consuming responses. As for fiqh, he refers to the juridical tradition that was solidified in the early Islamic centuries as the 'oppression of [systems of] knowledge' (al-istibdad al-macrifi).[4]

*** English: Shahrur lite

In spite of recent appearances on an Egyptian satellite channel with clerics from al-Azhar and several public appearances, Shahrur's basic method of communication remains the printed word. Until recently, few of his writings have been available in English. His Proposal for an Islamic Covenant is the first readily available public statement of his views in English.[5] The document was originally produced upon the invitation of the International Forum of Islamic Dialogue in London in mid-1999 as part of its 'Islam 21' discussion group formed to create a 'morally binding' charter to implement Islamic principles in the contemporary world.

Shahrur's Proposal is blunt. In the Arab Muslim world, he argues, 'entrenched oppressive regimes' flaunt slogans of modernity, science, and development, but accomplish nothing. The Islamic 'revival,' for its part, is 'hopelessly lost in protest and bargaining over secondary issues such as the Islamic veil, the republication of ancient texts by the millions, and in perpetrating senseless acts of violence with obscure goals' (p. 5). Shahrur argues that the role of human reason, as exercised by individual believers, is key to moral and civic development. God has a covenant (mithaq) with humankind based on reciprocal, binding trust in which compulsion plays no role (p. 11).

Shahrur is especially harsh in his condemnation of the traditional fiqh literature. He treats it as homogeneous, characterizing it as failing to explain the concepts of 'freedom, knowledge, and legislation' so central to God's covenant with humanity. This clear contractual covenant 'is distorted and badly explained in heritage literature (turath) and by those traditional jurists (fuqaha) who were closed to the participation of the laity and satisfied with reductive notions of freedom.' They saw freedom merely as the exemption from slavery, commonly practised in an earlier historical era, and did not explore its more basic meaning 'to choose between belief and disbelief', and 'obedience and disobedience' (pp. 12-13).

Yet societies in different historical periods need freedom, knowledge, and legislation 'according to their level of understanding' (p. 12). From Noah to the Prophet Muhammad, anyone who commits themselves to believing in God as the only God, to believe in Judgement Day, and to 'do right (yacmalu salihan) among themselves and for the rest of mankind' is a Muslim (pp. 14-15). Diversity in religious practices, including pilgrimage, 'is a natural law affirmed by God Himself: "Had your Lord willed, He would have made mankind one nation: but they will not cease differing"' (Sura 11, Hud, v. 118) (p. 17). In this sense, all believers be they Christian, Muslim, Jewish, or the followers of other faiths are Muslims. Islam as a faith (iman) is a specific covenant between God and believers who specifically follow the prophecy of Muhammad.

Shahrur bases the authority of his approach entirely on his interpretation of the Qur'an: 79 verses are cited in 43 pages, nearly one-third of the text. Having established the role of reason in understanding Islam and the

diversity of Islamic religious practices in his first 22 pages, Shahrur's proposal for an Islamic covenant takes up the latter half of the book. Basic to this project are the 'absolute values' of justice and freedom, which 'man practices in his society in a relative way' (p. 27). These include consultation (shura), the encouragement of good and the prohibition of evil.

In his expression of these moral principles, Shahrur reads like any number of Islamic modernist thinkers. The strong divergence begins when he unequivocally identifies shura with democracy, stating that it is 'the best relative form of government in which humankind can practise shura' (p. 28). Democracy unequivocally means the presence of genuine opposition, 'political pluralism, freedom of opinion and expression, and the freedom to express ideas peacefully through the available means of communication, and unbribed and non-corrupt committees that can freely oversee state apparatuses.' Without such institutions, 'one cannot adhere to the Islamic precepts of encouraging what is good and forbidding what is wrong, and consequently one cannot establish the optimal democratic government' (p. 29).

Shahrur makes a strong argument for the necessary and essential use of reason and public debate. The sanctity of the Qur'an's legislative verses is eternal, but the interpretation of 'what is valid for one era may be irrelevant for another.' Consequently, 'the interpretation of the legislative verses and their application is a human activity.' Interpretation is therefore always fallible and can only be 'relatively right'. It can never be accepted without discussion, and no individual, political party, or institution is above questioning (p. 30). Islam in the sense of God's covenant with all humankind is not subject to time or place, but states and societies always are in need of 'adaptive legislation that does not exist in the Qur'anic text.' The Prophet Muhammad did this for the conditions in Medina in the 7th century, and it remains for people and their democratically constituted parliaments to establish civil law suitable for other places and times.

*** Beyond norms

Compared to most other Islamic thinkers, Shahrur is a radical. He dispenses entirely with the fiqh tradition and invites all Muslims to commit themselves to those elements least developed in traditional jurisprudence democracy, adaptive legislative institutions, and human freedom. Shahrur's Proposal was originally written in Arabic. In the English version, which Shahrur reviewed with care, he explicitly reaches out to Muslims outside the Arab world, urging them to think beyond normative statements of Islamic doctrine. An honest legislature, capable of mistakes and errors of judgement but also self-correcting, is the ultimate statement of Islam. In its full realization, Islam in the sense of God's covenant with humankind, there is no place for the state regulation of belief or cultic practice. Like Immanuel Kant, Shahrur believes that the unadorned printed word speaks for itself. He leaves to others the implementation of his call for a greater voice for discussion and debate in public and civic life. One can challenge his blanket rejection of the fiqh tradition as a timeless monolith. Views such as Shahrur's may not constitute the dominant voice in public debates about the role of Islam in society, but they are increasingly acknowledged as an important element in the public sphere, even if only to be contested and challenged.

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[1] Damascus: al-Ahali Printing, Publishing, and Distribution, 1990.

[2] Muhammad Shahrur, Dirasat Islamiyya al-mucasira fi al-dawla wa-l-mujtamaca (Damascus: al-Ahali Printing, Publishing, and Distribution, 1994), al-Islam wa-l-iman: manzumat al-qiyam (Damascus: al-Ahali Printing,

Publishing, and Distribution, 1994), and Nahw usul jadida li al-fiqh al-Islami: Fiqh al-mar'a (Damascus: al-Ahali Printing, Publishing, and Distribution, 2000).

[3] Shahrur, Dirasat Islamiyya, pp. 15-46.

[4] Ibid., p. 222.

[5] Translated by Dale F. Eickelman and Ismail S. Abu Shehadeh (Damascus: al-Ahali for Printing, Publishing, and Distribution, 2000). Also available on the Web at http://www.isim.nl/isim/publications/other/shahrur

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The Sultanate of Oman had two celebrations in November 1992. The annual National Day, coinciding with the sultan's birthday, marked the twenty-second year of the reign of Qabus bin Sa'id, who overthrew his father in an almost bloodless palace coup on 23 July 1970. Only security personnel and senior government officials noted the second, unpublicized, event — the appointment of the first Omani national as head of the Internal Security Service [ISS]. From June 1959, when Oman's first European-style internal security service was formally created, until November 1992, contract or "seconded" British officers staffed the ISS and its predecessor organizations at the senior level.[1] The departure of the last seconded British director of intelligence marked the relegation of British personnel to specialized training and technical roles.

[1] "Contract" personnel were hired directly by Sultanate authorities; "seconded" officers loaned from British services, including military intelligence, the Special Air Service [SAS] and MI6, later resumed careers in their parent services without loss of seniority or benefits for their period of "secondment." In this article we use the current designation ISS to include its predecessor organizations except when the name distinctions are important in themselves.

The Omanization of the ISS had been underway for over a decade, although it lagged behind the departure of the British from the military and the uniformed police. On the surface, departing British intelligence officers portrayed the change merely as one of personnel: the organization's formal structure and responsibilities remained the same.

Was this portrayal of the changeover realistic? If the British assumption is correct, then the "ways of knowing" inculcated by nearly three decades of British-managed intelligence training and apprenticeship in Oman had been sustained. "Rules-in-use" — the practical culture of shared implicit workplace notions of trust, loyalty, responsibility, and obligation, "shaped directly by authority relationships or by other kinds of experiences" — guide people's conduct at work (Jackall 1988:4). This practical culture of intelligence apprenticeship and training passed from British to Arab personnel, despite

general resentment of foreign domination in Oman and other Arab countries. This view implies that the obligations of workplace and career overrode the preexisting Omani expectations of personal and social obligation and loyalty.

*** The “Practical Culture” of Political Intelligence

Robert Jackall’s concept of “rules-in-use,” developed through his studies of organizational morality in U.S. corporations, resembles what Robert Jervis (1986:33), in his study of a U.S. intelligence bureaucracy, has called the “informal norms and incentives” of producing intelligence knowledge. Intelligence officers, like members of other bureaucratic organizations — commercial, governmental, and academic — constantly assess one another’s decisions and actions to ascertain what informal rules and incentives work despite a never-ending succession of personnel changes and personal rivalries. Writing of American corporate life, Jackall argues that once managers reach crucial breaks in their careers, future chances depend principally on “the fealty and alliance structure” and “the ethos and style of the corporation,” regardless of that organization’s formal mission (Jackall 1988:13, 45). This informal structure forms the backbone of political intelligence organizations and survives most formal organizational changes.

Serving intelligence officers are as reluctant as their counterparts in the corporate world to describe the setting and style of their work in terms of “fealty and alliance structures,” although most officers would agree that producing political intelligence, like decisionmaking in foreign policy, “is almost never a tidy operation conducted according to impersonal rules.” At least at the upper levels, it resembles “court politics in a quasi-bureaucratic setting” (Sick 1990:234–235), and the structure of these politics can be made explicit and analyzed.

The task of creating a modem intelligence organization in a “new” setting with only nascent bureaucratic traditions involves inculcating service loyalties and incentives, including informal ones, sufficiently pervasive to displace potentially conflicting personal, sectarian, regional, and ethnic loyalties. In this view, adequate training and apprenticeship create the requisite “ways of knowing” and conditions of professionalism, regardless of

whether the locality of the intelligence practitioner is Belfast or Birmingham, Bidbid or Buraimi.

An alternative, less optimistic view of political intelligence assumes a “great divide” between the purpose and conduct of “Western” intelligence services and those of “non-Westem” societies, including, of course, the Sultanate of Oman. Advocates of this view often lump together all “non-Westem” societies, asserting that their cultural notions of tmst, obligation, and responsibility — the “ties that bind” of extended family, tribe, locality, religion, and sect, and assumptions about human nature — differ substantially from those of the people who shape and serve in “Western” intelligence organizations.

In the “strong” version of this argument, Chinese, Japanese, Muslim, Hindu, and African societies — note, concatenation of ethnic, national, geographical, and religious labels — resemble one another in perception of an historical “other” as an actual or potential enemy, and in sharing similar notions of the use of fraud and deception in statecraft and intelligence (e.g., Bozeman 1988:145–146). In this view, the “informal norms and incentives” likely to emerge in the wake of departing Western intelligence managers will differ significantly from those which prevailed under Western managers. Especially in small-scale societies such as Oman, the values and loyalties that suffuse society at large are arguably more likely to eclipse those inculcated through training and service in a formal intelligence bureaucracy with its accompanying “rules-in-use” because of the greater propensity for existing ties of kinship, region, sect, and schooling to compromise professional obligations. Some might ask, was not the ISS’s predecessor, the Oman Research Department (ORD), organized by the same Swahili-speaking officer who set up Uganda’s State Research Bureau? Once “indigenized,” that organization quickly adopted functions and modes of operation radically different from those intended by its expatriate advisors.

Oman’s ISS shows no sign of such a sinister transformation — indeed, one senior Omani commented that the ISS has the reputation among knowledgeable Omanis of being a “foreign” intelligence service because, unlike the domestic security services of certain neighboring states, few excesses have been attributed to it.[2] Nonetheless, doubt remains as to

whether the “ways of knowing” and of ordering work inculcated over the years by former British supervisors are likely to be sustained in the years ahead.

A weaker version of the “great divide’ concept — weak in the sense that it requires no overarching abstraction such as “non-Western” societies or civilizations — holds that there are enduring “national characteristics” or cultural identities, however permeable the boundaries of cultures may be in an era of mass education and mass communications. These traits sustain “modal” personal and social ideals over long historical periods and limit the extent to which foreign organizational forms and authority can be adopted without undergoing major transformations. Ruth Benedict’s The Chrysanthemum and the Sword (1967) is a classic example of this genre — more nuanced views of the linkages among notions of person, trust, and authority and specific organizational settings can be found in studies such as Ronald Dore’s (1973) comparative account of differing work styles to accomplish similar tasks in Japan and Britain and Michel Crozier’s (1964) account of how “informal” authority and personal relationships affect bureaucratic work in similar organizations in different national settings.

Our preliminary assessment is that the informal norms and incentives elaborated in the Omani ISS over the past two decades remain the best indicator of its performance now that it is independent of tutelage from contract foreign intelligence officers. The immediate past may not be an infallible guide to the future, but an account of how Oman’s domestic intelligence service has recently changed and adapted offers the best indication of the direction the service will take. Oman may at first seem to be an almost unique case, but most Middle Eastern states have, through colonial heritage or as independent states, called on outside countries to assist in the creation and reorganization of their national intelligence services. The practice is not confined to the past: the intelligence services of the newly independent republics of Central Asia are undergoing analogous transitions involving Russian and other foreign tutelage.

*** The ISS in Oman’s National Security Apparatus

As in most countries, Oman's ISS is only one of several partially overlapping services. Other government intelligence organizations include a Palace Office unit which deals primarily with foreign intelligence liaison and tasks (although it also conducts limited domestic inquiries), a small "special forces" unit (also part of the Palace Office), military intelligence, the Criminal Investigation Division of the Royal Oman Police, and, from 1972 through 1982, the Office of the Advisor to His Majesty the Sultan for National Security Affairs.[3] Like other intelligence organizations, the ISS has gone through periodic reorganizations since its inception (Fig. 1). Some of these are reflected in name changes. Thus the "Oman Research Department" (ORD) was rechristened the "Internal Security Service" soon after a new Director-General took office. He saw his primary task as accelerating Omanization and clarifying the service's actual functions.[4] Name changes also sometimes reflected the desire of successive directors to distinguish themselves from their predecessors.

The role of the ISS in Oman becomes clear when it is compared to "Third World" political intelligence organizations elsewhere. In discussing Zaire's Centre Nationale de Documentation (CND), the direct successor to the Belgian Congo's colonial Sdrete, Michael Schatzberg (1988:40–48) suggests a spectrum of possible activities: (1) coercion and control; (2) provision of fast and accurate information to the ruler and his advisers on political, economic, and social affairs; and (3) symbolic reassurance to the ruler. In Zaire, the first of these activities was paramount. In the ISS, the information-gathering task has been paramount since the mid-1970s. Although the domestic intelligence service has screened all applications for government employment and promotion since the 1970s, it appears to have exercised its potential for coercion very rarely. Indeed, educated Omanis in the late 1970s commonly referred to the ORD as the country's "university" (al-jami'a) because of its reputation as the eyes and ears of the government and the freedom with which its officers could report, analyze, and comment on political developments.

Until the mid-1970s, when Oman faced rebel incursions in the southern province of Dhufar and efforts to assassinate key officials and foment an insurrection in the north, the ISS's principal target was sharply defined. Since the late 1970s, its "targets" have been more diffuse — corruption involving government officials (for example, real estate transactions and the issuance

of building permits, vehicle and driver’s licenses, employment visas, and government contracts), some forms of religious activism, and advising policymakers on the long-term security implications of declining natural resources, the narrowing opportunities for advancement in the military, and the underfunding of government pension schemes. The ISS Director-General presents a periodic intelligence summary to the ruler and the National Defence Council, a body which through the late 1970s included both Omanis and foreigners but now is fully Omani. If, as French philosopher Louis Althusser observes, the state has two faces, information and oppression, the ISS has served primarily to gather information and act as a silent ombudsman for the population, voicing undercurrents of discontent which citizens hesitate to express directly.

| Pre-1958
“Traditional” Intelligence | The former sultan relies on letter-writers. The Muscat and Oman Field Force, precursor to the Sultan’s Armed Forces, acquires an intelligence officer in 1954, but because of the sultan’s disapproval he does not function formally in this capacity until the Jabal al-Akhdar war. |

| 1958–1971
“G2Int” Period | The British insist that the sultan create an intelligence unit within his military in return for support in suppressing the 1957–58 Jabal al-Akhdar rebellion. In July 1958, SAF Major Malcolm Dennison returns from a short SIS (MI6) training course in London. Appointment of first G2Int (military intelligence) coordinator in June 1959. Periodic meetings with British intelligence officers working in the neighboring Trucial States and with the British SIS head in Bahrain. Posts are established near SAF bases throughout northern Oman. Between March 1961 and the July 1970 coup, seconded British officers on two year tours perform intelligence functions. There are no Omani officers. Following the coup, it becomes known as the ‘‘Intelligence Department.” |

| 1971–1974
Oman Intelligence Service (OIS) | Created in 1971, the OIS remains part of the army until early 1973, when it becomes separate. In December 1972 a plot against the government is thwarted by “Operation Jason.” Training programs and formal criteria for recruitment and promotion are introduced in 1974. Most training and upper-level reporting is conducted in English and Omanization proceeds slowly. The Dhufar insurgency officially ends in 1975. |

| 1974–1986
Oman Research Department (ORD) | Major increases in personnel, but British remain in key senior posts. Intelligence priorities shift from the clearly identified target of organized rebels to the more diffuse ones of government corruption, assessing the implications of declining economic conditions, and religious activism. |

| 1987-
Internal Security Service (ISS) | Omanization is accelerated. By the early 1990s most reporting is in Arabic. The first Omani ISS director is appointed in November 1992. |

Figure 1. Oman’s Domestic Intelligence: A Chronology

*** The Foundation Myth of the 1970 Coup D’etat

As with other formal organizations, the ISS is profoundly shaped by its origins. Patterns of promotion and privilege can be traced to individual participation in the 1970 coup, and events which occurred prior to 1970 were relegated, as they are in Oman’s current history texts, to pre-history. The government expanded rapidly after 1970, with the “best and brightest” known to British officers and advisors receiving in-service training and rapid promotion.[5] In the context of the early 1970s, facility in the English language was essential for promotion in the military and security services, and Omanis in these services — the only pre-1970 career paths in the modem economy available except for an oil company training program grudgingly tolerated by the previous ruler — were frequently invited to serve in the post-1970 government.

Omanis in the pre-1970 intelligence organization, technically part of the Sultan’s Armed Forces (SAF), had little incentive to engage in the aggressive collection of information (Eickelman 1988a: 103–104). Throughout the 1960s, there were eight to twelve British intelligence officers in Oman serving with SAF at any one time. Half these officers were seconded from the British army and served two-year tours in Oman. The rest were contract officers working

directly for the ruler. The officers, called Sultan’s Intelligence Officers (SIOs), often remained in Oman for extended periods. In one case, an officer resigned his British commission in order to return to Oman on contract. All officers spoke passable Arabic or, in some cases, Swahili, which was useful in some regions of Oman (such as the Sharqiya region), which continued to have strong ties with East Africa. Some officers, however, needed translation assistance to understand the Omani dialect.

Each officer was supported by a “headman” (muqaddani), also called “chief agent” or “operator,” although officers (and headmen) could and did on occasion act independently of one another. The common characteristic of the pre-1970s headmen was their marginality to mainstream Omani society. Headmen included Omanis who had fled Zanzibar (a former Omani dependency) after its 1964 leftist and anti-Arab revolution, members of minority groups such as the Baluch, an orphan raised in Muscat by Christian medical missionaries, an ex-rebel from the 1957 revolt against the sultan, and the son of a tribal leader passed over for tribal leadership. Like the janissaries of the Ottoman empire, mercenary soldiers who were removed from their families and regions of origin so that their only loyalty was to the ruler, the status of headmen depended almost entirely on their privileged association with the European officers with whom they worked. Their access made headmen both powerful and vulnerable. Like the tribal leaders, merchants, and others on whom they relied for information, headmen were acutely aware of what their fate could be in the event of a major political reversal. As in Aden in 1967, the last year of British rule, the Europeans would leave the headmen to fend for themselves. From a headman’s perspective there were incentives for not performing their task well in order to distance themselves both from sultanate authorities and from dissidents.

Omani headmen and their British officers were equally aware that no significant use was being made of intelligence information. Months before the coup, an officer wrote in a February 1970 report:

<quote>

In my last letter I said I was a bit tired of producing info for which there was no reaction.... My own work is getting nowhere here at present. I am called a 5IO [Sultan's Intelligence Officer] but the Sultan is blocking my work because he will not help me to get anything done.... He is fiddling while

Rome bums and no one will change him (SIO Salala to G2Int, 1/21, February 13, 1970; original emphasis).[6]

</quote>

The writer of this report, the only intelligence officer allowed to work in the southern capital, Salala, implies certainty that the report would not be shared with the sultan or officers loyal to him.

The nearly complete lack of communication between the former sultan and his subjects, Oman's lack in the late 1960s of visible economic progress compared with the neighboring oil-producing Gulf states in which Omanis worked as "coolie" labor, the near-total absence of modem schools, and a corrupt civil government contributed to popular sympathy for the rebel movement. Omani students outside Oman, supported by various governments, including Iraq, South Yemen, Syria, and Egypt, underwent military training and raised funds to support anti-sultanate activities. In Dhufar, a full-fledged insurgency begun in 1965 had intensified by the late 1960s to the point where the sultan's southern domains hardly extended beyond the barbed-wire limits of Salala.

Omani intelligence only belatedly recognized the key role played by emigre Omani youth in rebel activities in the late 1960s and early 1970s. By the late 1960s, some rebels had received specialized training in weapons, explosives, and assassination techniques, and all were imbued with the spirit of a Marxist- inspired Arab nationalism. In March 1970, trained Omani rebels entered northern Oman and on 12 June 1970 attacked an army base at Izki. Because of poor planning, many rebel leaders were killed or captured following the Izki attack. Two weeks later, others were captured during a crisis meeting at a "safe house" in the coastal town of Mutrah. As the rebels

acknowledged in a post-mortem conference later that year, their attack was politically appropriate and at least passively supported by the civilian population, but their military training was weak. Because of their tactical errors and excellent follow-up by the SAF, rebel plans for northern Oman were seriously set back, although their cell structure remained intact and unknown to sultanate intelligence.[7] The SAF Commander, Major General John Graham, the main military “consumer” of intelligence at the time, dryly noted in retrospect:

<quote>

The paucity of information about NDFLOAG [The National Democratic Front for the Liberation of Oman and the Gulf], the principal threat in the north, was positively misleading. Although we had Intelligence Officers living, with their stalwart Omani assistants, near the main centres of population, their ability to obtain from a largely unhelpful citizenry accurate information about clandestine activities was in truth less than we at the time believed (Graham (1983).

</quote>

Graham’s comment was accurate but unfair. Intelligence officers were aware that trouble was brewing but lacked specific leads. Their usual sources were drying up because they were fed up with the sultan, wanted a change, and were aware that their silence about anti-sultan activity might precipitate it. In addition, prior to the Izki attack they were uncertain about which group was involved. The sultan’s brother, Sayyid Tariq bin Taymur, had another rebel group under training in Iraq. This group, unlike PFLOAG, was anti-sultan, but not antimonarchy, and therefore acceptable to the more conservative elements of the population.

*** Intelligence in the Post-1970 “New Era”

After the palace coup, the new ruler, Qabus bin Sa‘id, immediately declared an amnesty for surrendered rebels and announced visible and immediate

reforms. In the heady excitement of the period, intelligence personnel met many of their former adversaries, now technically known as SEPs, “surrendered enemy personnel.” However, intelligence officers immediately turned their main attentions to countering the insurgency in Dhufar, and implicitly assumed that the rebel “threat” in the northern half of the country had abated. This was in part because the sultan had ordered that amnestied rebels and other returnees should not be systematically debriefed on their organization and networks. One former officer recalled: “We saw these questions as merely historical. The sultan’s policy was that there would be no recriminations. So we had no encouragement to carry out formal debriefings of ex-rebels. We were so busy reorganizing and expanding the service that there was no time to think of going over the past.”[8]

In contrast to the pre-1970 period, the new sultan listened to intelligence reports. One former officer recalls:

<quote>

After the coup, I spoke with Qabus about what had gone wrong with his father’s regime. “Your father,” I told him, “was not getting the unvarnished truth. I hope that you won’t allow this to happen to you, Your Highness.” Qabus replied, “If I don’t know the truth, how can I rule my country?”[9]

</quote>

The dual system of national intelligence which informally evolved after the 1970 coup remains the backbone of Omani political intelligence. The Palace Office, initially headed by the last pre-1970 contract intelligence officer in Salala (who became a confidant, or Equerry, of the new ruler), handled external affairs, including contacts with Omanis seeking amnesty and return to their country; oversaw a special SAS unit entrusted with the sultan’s personal security; and served as principal liaison with foreign intelligence agencies, including the Central Intelligence Agency, and the British SAS teams in Dhufar which operated under the thin cover of “training” units.

The pre-coup senior Sultan's Intelligence Officer, Malcolm Dennison, became Director of Intelligence and remained in the post until 7 February 1972, when he was named National Security Advisor. Although responsible for the entire sultanate between mid-1970 and 1972, in practice Dennison was primarily concerned with the country's northern tribal interior.[10] In the first years after the coup, the division of responsibility between the Palace Office and the Intelligence Department (still part of SAF) remained flexible, so that the Palace Office dealt directly with most intelligence matters concerning Dhufar. Likewise, the lines between Omani and foreign intelligence services were thin.[11] Domestic intelligence was informally shared with foreign observers, particularly the British. One officer recalls: "There was no reason to keep things back at the time. We needed all the help we could get, and we had a lot to thank the British for in making the coup possible. For the first two or three years, there were no secrets. We were all great personal friends, and that included Qabus."[12]

Lines of authority became more sharply demarcated after 1972. The new Director of Intelligence, Ray Nightingale, Dennison's deputy director since early 1971, was a former staff officer of Rhodesian origin attached to the SAS with prior experience in Dhufar. He had been recommended to Oman by the British Ministry of Defence because of prior experience in organizing an intelligence service (Graham 1984) — Uganda's State Research Bureau — and experience in Kenya during the Mau Mau "Emergency." A senior Omani recalls that once Nightingale became director, he "put the department on a proper basis. He was no diplomat, he lacked finesse ... but he got things done."[13]

In February 1972, the Oman Intelligence Service [OIS] — as the Intelligence Department had been redesignated — learned that rebels were planning a major infiltration to "divert attention and security forces from the DHOFAR area," delay development plans, and "place severe strain on the loyalty of waverers (OIS 1973:7). The surrender of a ranking rebel in Cairo in September 1972 and the subsequent identification of a rebel Central Committee member in Muscat in December led to the arrest of 60 persons in the OIS's "Operation Jason" on 23 December 1972, with an additional 30 arrests, including 8 women, in January 1973. The government agreed in

principle to restructure the intelligence services in 1971, but the disclosures resulting from Operation Jason accelerated the reorganization.

The disclosures revealed the strength of the rebel organization within Oman, which included infiltration of the military.[14] Through the complicity of SAF signals clerks, rebels in northern Oman communicated through SAF facilities, which the OIS shared. Only after Operation Jason did the OIS acquire separate communications facilities. Likewise, the British and some Omanis discounted the continued appeal of the rebel movement for the country's educated youth, assuming that the country's rapid infrastructural development and growing economic opportunities sufficed to dampen political dissent. Rebel cells set up in 1970 remained intact — their participants possessed access to arms caches and remained committed to overthrowing the government.[15] Figure 2 shows the occupations of those arrested in Operation Jason who were brought to trial. Their average age was 28. The leaders were educated — clerks, ministry officials, teachers, and those who had had some access to education within the military; the remaining arrestees had "minor responsibilities for liaison and the concealment and movement of arms" (OIS 1974:27).

[[d-f-dale-f-eickelman-m-g-dennison-arabizing-the-om-1.jpg][Figure 2. Operation Jason Arrests: Occupations (N = 69)]]

*** Omanization: First Steps

As a result of the immediate security threat in the early 1970s, OIS reorganization initially did little to broaden training or formalize promotion criteria. By 1972, the army had created 100 Arab and Baluch officers (Graham 1983), but the OIS could make no parallel claims to in-service training. In early 1972, the service consisted of 12 British officers, 3 NCOs and 42 Omanis, none of whom held senior ranks. The key explanation for this delay was operational. With an active insurgency in the south and evidence of preparations for major rebel activities in the northern half of the country, the principal intelligence task — providing information useful to the military and thwarting attacks on installations and personnel — took precedence (OIS 1975:11). By 1973, only two Omanis, both former rebels, joined the

intelligence services as officers. One joined the OIS after being sent abroad on a short training course, but he soon left to serve elsewhere in the government. The other worked in the Palace Office from late 1970 until 1973, when he left Oman to join the police of a neighboring country.[16] All other Omanis in the OIS were “operators,” “agents,” or support staff such as drivers, cooks, and guards.

The OIS formalized in-service training only in January 1974, when Nightingale issued a document specifying service grades and the training goal, “to build for the future by offering a properly balanced career structure for people of the right calibre, and to provide the training necessary to develop a Service with high standards.”[17] Qualifications for various levels of operators and officers were made explicit, and “Kashmir House,” the intelligence center on the outskirts of Suhar, became the country’s principal intelligence training center. Nonetheless, the continued reliance on English instead of Arabic and the minimal educational backgrounds of most recruits are evident in training documents, which emphasized a high visual content for all lectures (Fig. 3). Although lower- level reporting was written in Arabic, important reports required English translations to reach senior officers. Recruiting was done through existing intelligence officers, most of whom were British.

- COURSE CONTENT: Courses are to include the maximum amount of practical work. Lectures are to be in Arabic whenever possible, and all lectures are to have a high visual content.

- VISUAL AIDS: Slides, video tapes and vufoils are to be progressively produced to support the training programme. Video tapes and vufoils are to be exclusively in Arabic. English-speaking lectures are to be provided with a suitably annotated script.

- TEXTBOOKS: Internally produced manuals are to be prepared at the earliest opportunity; stress being placed on pictorial content.

— Extract from Annex F to OIS Trg. 1 (15 January 1974), Training-Instructional Policy.

Figure 3. The goal of early Arabization could not be met in practice.

The practical necessity of facing an organized rebel movement, with significant support and training facilities in Syria, Lebanon and South Yemen, continued to favor the promotion and advancement of Zanzibari Omanis because of their excellent command of English. Although able to communicate effectively with their expatriate superiors, they were poorly connected to the towns and villages in which the majority of the country’s population lived.

From the perspective of native-born Omanis, the country’s intelligence apparatus remained British at the top and quasi-alien in the middle ranks, with few opportunities for “real” Omani promotion and training. Although not as stratified by ethnicity as the police of colonial Kenya or other former British colonies in Africa (Wolf 1973), decisions made for expediency were inadvertently beginning to have such an effect. The undercurrent of resentment was stanched in 1988, when it was made a requirement that recruits to the ISS (and to certain other government employment) be native-born.

Lower-ranking personnel, especially those drawn from northern Oman, felt demoralized by the language barrier within the intelligence service and the Omani government. One officer, commenting on the scope of government corruption in the late 1970s, said that intelligence personnel had become “cynical about their tasks. We are ashamed to have translated into English reports on what people are saying about their government.”[18] The need to write reports in English or have them “translated” upward also discouraged

informal peer communications between Omanis and non-Omanis at higher service levels. Senior Omanis fluent in English, especially those of East African origin, were not necessarily at ease with written Arabic. Perhaps to avoid highlighting the continued dependency on English within the ISS, the 1974 training document failed to specify language requirements for higher-level officers, stating only that entry-level operators had to be “fully literate in Arabic.”[19] Language switching in vertical communications also limited feedback at lower service levels of the service to “tasking” and verbal comments instead of formal appraisals designed to improve skills in writingt analysis, and interpretation. As an indication of changing audiences at higher-levels, mid-level reporting often resembled ethnographic case studies, replete with kinship charts, so that superior officers, often unfamiliar with the complex politics of key Omani families, tribes, and regions, could understand the relationships described in narrative reports.

An August 1977 incident involving a long-running struggle for tribal leadership in a northern coastal area suggests how underlying societal loyalties, expectations, and obligations influenced intelligence reporting. In the words of “Hamdan,” ORD’s regional Head of Station (ra’is markaz), the incident threatened to become “political.”[20] Hamdan wrote in Arabic to the DirectorGeneral of Intelligence that he had received a serious written complaint in April 1977 “from an inhabitant of [Land (balad) X]” concerning the conduct of “Shaykh Khalaf,” the leader of a major coastal tribe.[21] Before discussing the complaint, however, Hamdan described his relationship to the complainant: “His former wife is my wife’s father’s sister (‘anima zawjatihi).” This preamble was intended to dispel the accusations — which surfaced anyway — that Hamdan was actively invovled in the dispute and therefore an unreliable reporter. In the Omani context, the preamble suggests why the complainant had sufficient confidence in Hamdan to bring charges in the first place. Some would dismiss Hamdan’s relationship with the accuser as distant and even contrived — the linkage is with a. former wife — but all the depositions in this and similar files highlight similar details.

Hamdan initially told his relative that he would not forward a letter to “the government” (by which he means the ruler) and advised him to address a letter to the Minister of the Interior (MOI), who is responsible for the confirmation and dismissal of tribal leaders, with a copy to the National

Security advisor. He subsequently investigated the veracity of the allegations, however, and interviewed Khalaf as part of his inquiries. During this visit, Khalaf declared “that he should fornicate since the youth fornicate and he should have his share.” For an Omani, it is almost unimaginable for a father to discuss his sexual activities in front of his own son, yet Khalafs son was in the room when Khalaf expressed these views on intergenerational equity. In relating this detail, Hamdan effectively portrays Khalaf as not only corrupt, but depraved.

Hamdan also mentions an earlier petition calling on the Ministry of the Interior to remove Khalaf as tribal leader. Until 1958, Hamdan’s brother, “Salah,” was shaykh, but Khalaf allegedly had him murdered. Hamdan lists the 18 signers, together with their occupations and interrelationships, including another ORD Head of Station and several ORD employees. The Achilles’ heel in the petition was that its signers wanted Salah’s son appointed as the new shaykh, and many of them were close relatives to the two brothers. Thus, Khalafs supporters could allege that the accusations manifested only family jealousies and had nothing to do with politics.

After meeting Khalaf, Hamdan delivered the initial accusations to the Ministry of the Interior and on 31 July asked to meet the Minister “to shake hands with him.” During the interview, the Minister dismissed the allegations, saying that the letter Hamdan had delivered contained fabricated accusations.

Khalaf appears to have distinguished himself in the abuse of authority. He extorted payments to authorize marriages, forced women to have sex with him, imprisoned and beat people “without any offense,” and threatened to punish anyone who acted against his wishes. Hamdan speculated that the Ministry of the Interior and ORD may have ignored prior reports because Khalafs relatives in key positions convinced the Minister that if the complaints were not just an intrafamily squabble, then they were inspired by an emigre dissident. People also feared Khalafs boasts of close ties with British military and intelligence officers, who routinely accepted his hospitality (as they would by protocol when visiting any tribal region).

In his report, Hamdan explained his reluctance to become involved in the matter: he considered the problem a “civilian” one which should have been handled by the Ministry of the Interior, who had the authority to appoint tribal leaders. In the face of inaction by the local judge (qadi) and governor (wall), whom local inhabitants regarded as “puppets” of Khalaf, and the reluctance of the MOI to intervene, Hamdan warned that several individuals were selling their lands and leaving the region or the Sultanate. He recommended that Khalaf be removed from office.

The relationships among the actors in the dispute were sufficiently complicated to warrant a kinship diagram, which appears both in the Arabic original and its translation.[22] The common themes in the original complaints and in Hamdan’s report — defining the dispute as “political” and indicating that prior appeals through “civilian” government channels had failed — suggest that both Hamdan and the original accusers knew how the dispute needed to be framed to initiate ORD intervention. The complaint was a serious matter since it was a direct challenge to a decision made by the powerful Minister of the Interior. This fact explains the completeness of the dossier and the meticulous translation of its contents into English.

Did the complex web of kin relationships among the accusers and the accused, investigators and the investigated, bend intelligence reporting? This was clearly an issue for Hamdan, who carefully reported his relationship to the parties involved. An Arabic-speaking British officer advised him on neutralizing charges of nepotism and tutored him in report writing.[23] The incident obliged Hamdan to articulate formally Khalafs abuses in terms of expectations of state authority in the “new era” Sultanate. The incident was marked “top secret,” but ORD’s reputation for “getting things done” was on the line once the complaints were put forward. Unresolved complaints discredit ombudsmen. ORD’s specific actions may have remained confidential, but the fact that it was investigating the complaint and making representations about it became public knowledge, even if never reported in the state media. Khalaf was removed from office.

The blurred distinction between extended family and social group, on the one hand, and professional responsibilities, on the other, could also directly

threaten intelligence operations: Operation Jason in 1972 revealed a police employee who resisted rebel recruitment efforts but wrote to warn his brother in Beirut that he was being sought (Fig. 4).

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5. (***) is the brother of (***) who was detained in OP SIKEEN. (*•*) is employed as a civilian clerk in the (”’) Station of the Royal OMAN Police. It is said that he resisted all attempts to recruit him into PFLO as he is opposed to communism. He wrote to his brother (••’), then in BEIRUT, and informed him that the Royal OMAN Police were looking for him and that intelligence operations were in progress.

— Extract from OIS, “Operation Sikeen,’ p. 69.

Figure 4. The line between professional and family responsibilities becomes inevitably blurred.

Such conflicts became increasingly apparent as Omanis bom in Oman (and not in East Africa) joined the security services in increasing numbers. In a small, face-to-face society, ties of trust and loyalty based on extended family, region, and common schooling are pervasive and likely to remain so.[24] The oath of secrecy and loyalty to the sovereign required for entry into government service — composed by Nightingale in 1974 and intended to apply to all government employees — was itself foreign in style. The oath’s all-encompassing nature (Fig. 5) made every government action secret unless declared otherwise, inadvertently encouraged duplicate expenditures as ministries commissioned duplicate studies and projects, and demoralized Omanis who saw the secrecy oath blurring the thin line between private business and government responsibilities among some senior officials.[25] The oath did nothing to address issues of potential conflict of interest and could be seen as inadvertently facilitating their concealment.

I (insert name) do solemnly swear by the Holy Quran that I give my allegiance to His Majesty the SULTAN. I swear that I will truly obey all lawful commands given to me by superior officers duly appointed by His Majesty.

I solemnly swear that I will never, without proper authority, reveal to any person, any information entrusted to me in the course of my duties, and I acknowledge that I may be dismissed and will pay the full and heavy penalty before the law if I betray any trust imposed in me by His Majesty.

I understand that my service may be terminated at SIX MONTHS NOTICE.

— Annexe to Trg. 1,15 January 1974.

Figure 5. The Oath of Allegiance and Declaration, 1974–1987.

After the fall of the Shah of Iran and the November 1979 takeover of the Great Mosque in Mecca by Saudi-led religious radicals, ORD, like its counterparts elsewhere in the Gulf, realized that the political dimension of religious activism was becoming a major feature of the political landscape. This realization focused attention on Oman as one of the last two Arabian peninsula countries — the other was Bahrain — with an intelligence service run by non-Muslim foreigners.

As with the disclosures from Operations Jason and Sikeen earlier in the decade, the Omani state faced the perceived alternatives of intelligence efficacy or accelerated Omanization. Through the mid-1980s, Omanis replaced British officers in ORD at a glacial rate, which did little to strengthen the morale of Omani subordinates. The armed forces and police faced a similar problem but were obliged to act quickly, in part because uniformed officers could resign their Omani commissions and continue their careers (at a higher salary) in the armed forces of the neighboring United Arab Emirates. [26] Unlike their uniformed counterparts, ORD officers did not have the option of continuing careers outside of Oman, so there was no hemorrhage of the “best and brightest.”

*** Toward an “Islamic” Intelligence Service?

In the wake of the Shah’s downfall, the U.S. hostage crisis, and the takeover of the Grand Mosque in Mecca, security officials throughout the region were tense. The principal “target” of the 1960s and 1970s — Marxist-oriented secular Arab “nationalists” — was clearly delineated. They had a formally structured organization, external state sponsors, organized support networks, and spoke formally (if not in a way understood by most of Oman’s population) of “ideology.”

Unlike the earlier leftist threat, the challenge of changing religious sensibilities drew directly on ideas, values, and practices shared by all Omanis, even as religious expression took on new forms in the wake of the Iranian revolution. More important for long-term political change, the spread of mass higher education in the 1980s created new political expectations among young Omanis. Just as educated Omanis formed the core of the rebel movement in an earlier era, Oman’s educated youth in the 1980s were key participants in the various forms of religious activism. The difference in the 1980s was their large numbers, as mass education began to take hold (Eickelman 1992).

Some officials thought at first that Oman’s small indigenous Shi’i community constituted a potential “third column.”[27] The majority of Shi‘i are Sindi- and Arabic-speaking Liwatiyya, whose ties to India and Pakistan are

considerably stronger than their ties with Iran, but this was not clearly understood. Religious literature, especially that coming from Iran, was carefully examined after 1979 and often confiscated. In late 1979, the one Shi‘i bookstore in the capital was temporarily closed under orders from the Ministry of Information, but it reopened after protests and a promise to submit all books and pamphlets for censorship.

Similarly, after the 1979 attack on Mecca’s Great Mosque, uniformed police were posted outside the principal mosque in Nizwa, the largest city in the northern Oman interior and former capital of the Ibadi imamate.[28] An Ibadi religious scholar in Nizwa — Ibadi Muslims form the near-totality of Oman’s population in the northern interior — commented at the time, “The government now knows so little of what we think in the interior that they believe we want the imamate restored.”[29] Reporting on distinctions among religious activist groups posed its own problems, as briefers had to be careful not to state the self-evident in Muslim belief and practice. As with services elsewhere, the tendency was to focus on potential transnational links.[30]

One seconded British intelligence officer in Oman contrasted the religious activists — only a few of whom were security threats — and the Marxist movements of an earlier era:

<quote>

The new Islamic movements, especially the da’wa movement, [31] are built around close friends and associates. This makes them difficult to identify and penetrate. They are not organized like Marxist groups into cells with formal hierarchies. It is even more difficult for us to distinguish between those groups which constitute threats — for example, one group tried to steal university examination questions to distribute to its members, so that they could cheat on their examinations and have more time to work for the movement — and those which have no political goals.[32]

</quote>

The trend toward greater religiosity was society-wide, influencing the ranks of the “watchers,” particularly the younger cadres. Said one senior Omani intelligence official:

<quote>

Our service is becoming more Islamic and purist. It still works well because the officers know that much of their reporting actually goes to the top [i.e., to the sultan]. If it did not, the reporting would dry up. It happened before here, and it has happened in other countries. Likewise, when we learn that certain people are expressing dissatisfaction with the regime, my men know that there are reasons for that dissatisfaction. If we lock up anyone solely for expressing discontent, then we’ll have no more reporting of discontent. My people will try to protect one another and their sources, because they agree with what their sources say.

</quote>

The concern for reliable reporting on Islamist movements put a premium on the effectiveness of intelligence gathering, but this may have run counter to the larger goal of intensified Omanization. This dilemma — intelligence efficacy versus accelerated Omanization — was clearly expressed in a 1982 lecture given to senior non-Omani ORD personnel at “Kashmir House.” Entitled “The Ways Ahead,” the lecturer inadvertently suggested the gulf which some British believed to exist between non-Arab senior officers and Omani personnel:

<quote>

To create a sophisticated security organization, and to develop among inexperienced staff the necessary qualities of clear thinking and judgment, demands not only that we have men of the right calibre, but also that due

regard is paid to the fundamentally different way in which a Muslim will approach any intellectual problem.... In looking at ways to encourage the best work from our Omani colleagues and subordinates, we should not assume that those who most readily adopt our standards and values, especially social values, are necessarily the most suitable to assume major responsibility.[33]

</quote>

To buttress this point, the lecturer distributed a one-page photocopy from Islam and Plight of Modem Man by Seyyed Hossein Nasr, former confidant of the Shah of Iran and rector of Reza Shah Pahlevi University. In the extract, Nasr explains that young Arabs were turning to religion in a search for “their own roots” and for “an answer to the dilemma of human existence in an inhuman world whose overt contradictions become more apparent every day” (Nasr 1975:95–98). In the margins of the extract, the ORD lecturer notes, “SAVAK [the Iranian intelligence service] didn’t notice it!” and “We must pay serious regard to this valid view when recruiting/training and planning for the future.” The lecturer was adamant that there need be no conflict “between the high standards we hope to achieve, and an accommodation with the different philosophical approach which does, AND ALWAYS WILL, prevail in an [I]slamic country” (original emphasis).

Yet the lecturer undermined his desire to help create a sophisticated Omani security organization in three ways. First, the absence of Omani intelligence officers from the meeting indicated the continuing gap between British managers and their Omani subordinates. Even if British and Omani staff often worked side by side in practice, Omanis remained subordinate to the British in formal roles and responsibilities. Thus no Omani officer was present to respond to the claim that because of their religion, Islam, they engaged in a “fundamentally different” way of thinking.

Second, the logic of the lecturer’s argument that Muslims think differently and “always will” points at best to a “separate but equal” intelligence organization, with all of the ironies this phrase implies. The lecturer said that

the “inexperienced” Omani staff currently lacked “necessary qualities of clear thinking and judgment” and implied that greater levels of professionalism were possible. Even so, such professionals could not operate in the same way as the Europeans because of their culturally defined understandings — because they were “Muslims.”

Finally, in privileging the differences between “Muslim values” and “our values” in his argument, the lecturer unwittingly masked the new and thoroughly modem sense of accountability of rulers to the people and legitimate government shared by younger Omanis. These notions had emerged as central components of the foundational myth of the rise to power of Sultan Qabus in 1970. Younger Omani intelligence officers believed that a new political order had been ushered in, coinciding with the new religiosity of younger Omanis. In spite of pressures to compromise professional functions, Omanis performed their duties remarkably well, expressing demoralization only on those occasions when they felt that they were blocked from reporting on allegations of corruption among senior officials or when they felt that such reporting was ignored. The lecturer saw the “distance” between British and Omani officers as due to “fundamentally different” values. For their part, younger Omani officers regarded the “distance” between the British and Muslim Omanis as due to an organizational ethos in which their prospects for promotion were blocked by foreigners whose commitment to Omanization appeared ambivalent. Omanis saw the British as short-circuiting their espoused standards of professional conduct and morality in order to preserve their jobs and influence.

Ironically, the religious sensibilities of younger Omani intelligence officers were more complex and nuanced than those expressed by the lecturer in “The Way Ahead.” Omani intelligence officers, like their British counterparts, objectified religious tradition in the sense of thinking increasingly of religion as a codified set of beliefs which could be expressed in school texts and to foreign Muslims unfamiliar with the development of Islam in Oman (Eickelman 1989). But Omani officers, like younger Omanis in general, were also aware that the development of ideas of Islam which should influence the conduct of politics as well as personal decisions could be a beneficial society-wide change.

Religious discontent, or discontent expressed in religious terms, had become so pervasive that it did not constitute a “target” in any conventional sense of political intelligence unless a group advocated specifically illegal action in nonreligious terms. Such action might include stealing examinations, embezzlement, or clandestinely importing religious tracts or videos deemed “incendiary.”

In Oman, senior intelligence officials do not speak in terms of immediate threats to the regime but frame arguments so as to persuade policymakers, especially the ruler, to take steps to head off problems which will become crucial in the not-too-distant future. These include: declining oil revenues; the rapid depletion of water resources; underfunded government and military pension schemes, which will create a major drain on state resources as the first major wave of retirements begin in a few years’ time; the need to introduce taxation to support government services in an environment in which the government is perceived not as a collector, but as a distributor of goods and entitlements; and the rapidly increasing number of school and university graduates with no employment prospects. These issues lack the specificity of tracing insurgencies but are nonetheless vital to Oman’s immediate future and the stability of its regime.

*** Oman’s Next Generation

Omanization proceeded by fits and starts. At many points younger Omani officers could have been justified in doubting the stated British commitment to training Omani staff for all levels of the service. Nearly two decades elapsed after the accession of Qabus in 1970 before Omanization began in earnest at higher service levels.

The development and evolution of an Omani intelligence service was not a simple grafting of a British civil service type tradition. On the one hand, the ISS and its predecessor organizations sustained professional standards that would be recognizable to a “European” service. The practical culture of intelligence is not radically different from the corresponding British organizational culture. On the other hand, the younger Omani staff, more so than their European superiors and mentors, developed localized

understandings of Islamic sensibilities, politics, and intelligence “threats.” This far from simple picture of Omani intelligence thus undermines the assumption, noted earlier, that intelligence services cannot be successfully reproduced in “alien” environments.

Omanization is now beginning to evolve its own dynamics. The educational level of new recruits to the ISS has risen with that of the population at large, although, as with other government employment, the rate of recruitment has slowed since the end of major ORD/ISS expansion in 1978. In recent years, as few as four applicants out of 70 have been selected in annual competitions for officer training. Since late 1986, Omanization and Arabization have accelerated. By 1991 the majority of all reporting, except that at the very top, was in Arabic. Now all reporting is in Arabic.

New intelligence officers are instilled with the idea that they are an elite service working for Oman and its people. The oath reproduced in Figure 5 was replaced in 1987 with one in which officers swear loyalty to “the Omani nation” (al-watan al-‘Umani) and not to the ruler himself.[34] This notion, though possibly dangerous, combined with professionalism, makes a career in the ISS more appealing to university graduates who comprise the quasi-majority of new officer recruits. The five-part qualifying examination for new entrants emphasizes complex skills of analysis and report-writing in Arabic. The requirement to write reports in English has been dropped, although most new recruits continue to have facility in English.

Seen in perspective, Oman’s intelligence services are less unique than they first appear. Through their colonial heritage or as independent states, most Middle Eastern governments have had other countries assist in the creation and reorganization of national intelligence services. The more dramatic transfers of leadership may now be a matter of the past for most of the Middle East, but similar transitions are underway in the new republics of Central Asia and elsewhere.

The ISS, like other political intelligence organizations, does more than serve as the state’s eyes and ears and offer symbolic reassurance. Although it has the potential to coerce and control, it mostly seeks to persuade by advice

offered through confidential channels. Control over secrecy and openness gives power: it influences what policymakers know (or think they know) and thus what they choose to do. In this sense, claims to authoritative political knowledge not only draw upon existing social and political resources but create and multiply them.

Simmel (1950:330) writes that secrecy offers “the possibility of a second world alongside the manifest world; and the latter is decisively influenced by the former.” The practical culture of the intelligence community, with its rules for achieving “objectivity” in political reporting and analysis, constitutes such a second world. Authoritative political knowledge, like the threat of force, is not always visible. Events which do not occur can be as important to demonstrating and maintaining authority as control or knowledge of visible events.

Efforts by British and Omani ISS staff in 1990 and 1991 to select a service emblem set to rest the notion that there is a “separate but distinct” understanding of political intelligence in Muslim societies. One of the Omani staff suggested a design incorporating the hoopoe (Arabic, hud hud), an elegant, plumed bird indigenous to southwest Arabia and mentioned in the Qur’an:[35]

The ISS presented a model of the emblem to the ruler, but he couldn’t make it out and returned it not with explicit disapproval, but without approval, which is the same thing. When we discovered that the Jordanian service has the same bird [as its emblem], the idea was dropped. So now there is a crest, a dagger, and a play on words like amana [integrity] and aman [security].[36]

Even as religious issues become manifest in Oman’s current political environment, the informal norms and incentives of the workplace have not been eclipsed by general cultural or religious considerations. The crest, the dagger, and the “play on words” of the ISS’s new emblem may not make hearts beat faster, but the core of the service — an “organizational morality” of professionalism and restraint — continues to prevail.

*** Note

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M. G. Dennison began his intelligence career in 1946. From 1954 until 1983 he was in the service of the Sultanate of Oman, serving from 1970 until 1972 as Director of Intelligence and from then until his retirement in 1983 as Special Advisor on National Security Affairs to H. M. the Sultan of Oman.

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[2] Eickelman interview, London, 21 September 1987. The exception is in the years 197072. An Omani businessman related that he and others experienced various forms of “mild” intimidation in this period — such as vandalized cars and late-night telephone threats which they attributed to certain Jordanian “contract” officers. The incidents ceased after one victim complained to a senior (British) security official (Eickelman interview, Muscat, 21 November 1982).

[3] From 1954 until 1971, there was also a significant commercial intelligence presence in Oman, although its practitioners would not apply the term “intelligence” to their activities. Oman’s major oil company, Petroleum Development (Oman) maintained a de facto intelligence capability relevant to company operations. In times of crisis, such as the 1957–58 Jabal al-Akhdar rebellion, PD(O)’s Arabic-speaking Labour Relations Officers worked closely with SAF, although they later sought to distance themselves from SAF activities. In the wake of the discovery of oil in commercial quantities in 1964, and its export beginning in 1967, PD(O) activity included efforts pursued directly by the General Manager to persuade the former ruler to adopt policies to ensure his country’s stability. For all practical purposes, the oil company’s intelligence capability was dismantled in 1971.

[4] Eickelman/Dennison interview, 2 August 1987.

[5] The background of the first Omani head of the ISS is a case in point. Like a sizable minority of Omanis of his generation, he was born and educated in Zanzibar, a sultanate possession until 1861 and home to ethnic Omanis since then. After the 1964 revolution in Zanzibar, his family entered Oman as refugees. Recruited into the army because he was educated, spoke English, and looked promising as a clerk — and because the Zanzibari driver for the recruiting officer asked the officer to find something for his “brother,” he served in the Quartermaster’s Branch (Air Movements and Aircraft Loading) of military flights between Muscat and Dhufar. In 1972, he joined the Stores Branch of ORD. There, his obvious competence, fluency in English, and rapport with the Swahili-speaking Director of Intelligence led to his being placed on the fast track for promotion. By the mid-1980s he had become one of two Deputy Directors of Intelligence. He was granted a year’s leave in the late 1980s to join a UK university as a special postgraduate student in Middle Eastern politics.

[6] Unless otherwise indicated, cited documents are from the archives of the Office of the Advisor to H. M. the Sultan on National Security Affairs, Muscat. In 1983 these records were moved to the Palace Office.

[7] Eickelman interview with a former rebel in Kuwait, 10 December 1987; Oman Intelligence Service, “Operation Sikeen,” 29 October 1974, pp. 4–6.

[8] Eickelman interview, 21 August 1988.

[9] Eickelman interview, 15 April 1984.

[10] After 7 February 1972, when Dennison was appointed Advisor to H. M. the Sultan on National Security Affairs, he took with him as staff Omanis who had worked for the intelligence office in the pre-1970 period and continued to participate in the meetings of Oman’s National Defence Council. In a note to Eickelman (11 August 1988), Dennison explained his title’s origin: “[Name deleted] thought up my title. Kissinger was all the rage at the time and this might have had something to do with it. The title was a misnomer and embarrassed me. It was never intended I should be an Omani Kissinger, of

that I am sure.... It was clear what was expected of me. Keep an eye on ORD and monitor its intelligence output; provide unbiased advice and information on the tribes and their [leaders], something which the Sultan quickly realized he could not expect from his ministers; look out for and report on corruption in government; prompt aid in the name of the Sultan personally to the people and villages from a fund provided by the Sultan (this was to take up most of my time and my staff); bring deserving cases to the Sultan's notice."

[11] Connections with the CIA were established at a meeting at the U.S. embassy in London in June 1971, arranged by Ghassan Shakir, a Libyan with close connections to the U.S., and a subsequent visit to Oman by Robert Anderson. See Townsend (1977:90–91) and Halliday (1975:309).

[12] Eickelman interview, 22 July 1986.

[13] Eickelman interview, 11 August 1988.

[14] Graham (1983) alludes to this penetration without specifically mentioning the December 1972 arrests, noting that after "considerable strain ... SAF emerged intact from this difficult period."

[15] "Operation Sikeen' [Knife] in October 1974 — in which documents captured following an incident at a routine army roadblock once again compromised rebel networks and organization — indicated both the continued appeal of the rebel movement to Oman's educated youth and the inability of the movement's leadership to realistically gauge its lack of support.

[16] This was the Iraqi-trained 'Abdallah Sa'id al-Rasbi, whose Popular Organization for the Liberation of Oman (POLO) sponsored the first armed incursion into northern Oman in April 1969. Nineteen members of the group were captured soon after they entered Oman. After they shot several goats for food without offering to pay for them, villagers reported their incursion to the Oman Gendarmerie, which captured or killed 19 of the 25. Al-Rasbi

escaped. In the Palace Office, al-Rasbi was responsible for arranging the return of other former rebels and traveled often to Kuwait and other neighboring Gulf states. In 1973, he joined the Ras al-Khaima police as an intelligence officer. He died the following year in a road accident. Some Omanis attribute his death to various regional intelligence organizations, including that of Iraq.

[17] Cover letter, dated 21 January 1974, to “Recruitment, Training, and Promotion” (Oman Intelligence Service, Trg. 1, 15 January 1974).

[18] Eickelman interview, 10 December 1982.

[19] OIS, “Recruitment, Training, and Promotion,” Annex E. The document outlines five grades of operator and officer, with subcategories for the lower grades and their military and civilian equivalents.

[20] ORD file SF/28,1977. We have altered names and deleted identifiers.

[21] The initial letter which Hamdan enclosed reads (in the official ORD translation, which is attached to the Arabic original), “I don’t like that my name be mentioned [the letter is, however, signed] nor do I want to complain ... but this person has [sic] very evil acts and I don’t know whether or not the government knows, but the reasons are undoubtedly political (siyast). So if the government does not keep this sheikh away from us and protect us against his evil deeds, we may [leave] the homeland of our grandfathers and our fathers as others had done for the same reason, such as [names deleted]. The government does not accept injustice to its people especially after Sultan Qaboos has ruled the country” (letter dated 5 June 1977).

[22] SF/28, 3 August 1977.

[23] Eickelman interview, 17 July 1985.

[24] Oman’s population was 450,000 in 1971 and estimated at 1,008,000 in 1985, of which 20.7 percent, or 219,000 were foreign workers and their dependents (Eickelman 1988:158).

[25] Wrote one former advisor of the mid-1970s period: “Cynics would be forgiven for suggesting that the Sultan[’s] ... absolutism is being replaced by the absolutism of a profit-motivated oligarchy of businessmen who have ministerial authority” (Townsend 1977:146). Following locally unpublicized but widely known corruption and conflict-of- interest scandals in the early 1980s — documented by ORD — the sultan issued a new law (Royal Decree 82/39, 22 May 1982) attempting to define conflicts of interest. This decree, clumsily written by Egyptian legal advisors, prompted several senior government officers to tender their resignations, arguing that the definitions of conflict were “unsuitable” for business practices in the Sultanate. As a result, an unpublished ministerial letter issued several months later (Office of the Deputy Prime Minister for Legal Affairs, 15 September 1982) suspended the “offending” articles of the decree pending “unification” of the different interpretations. No further action has been taken.

[26] Eickelman interviews with Omani officers in the UAE armed forces, AI-‘Ain, 16 March 1980.

[27] The Shi‘a in Oman constitute less than 2 percent of the citizen population.

[28] This imamate, one of the world’s last theocracies, was assimilated into the Sultanate’s direct administration in 1955 (see Eickelman 1984).

[29] Eickelman interview, 13 December 1979.

[30] Some briefings are labeled as concerning “foreign” religious activism even when they are intended as commentary on domestic developments.

Thus, Indonesia’s internal security organization, Komkatib, asked a leading Indonesian religious scholar, himself a moderate activist, to present a series of lectures on Islamic activism in the Middle East. “After the first month, I got them to distinguish between Khomeini-style political activism and ‘apolitical’ reform movements. Although the majority of my audience were Muslim, they were uninformed on Islamic themes. I was always careful to state that I was speaking about foreign Islamic movements and not our Indonesian ones, although of course their interest was in Indonesian Islamic movements and its foreign connections (Eickelman interview, Jakarta, 16 August 1985).

[31] The Pakistani-based Jama‘at al-tabligh wa-da‘wa ila Allah, known locally in Oman as the da ‘wa (“Call”) movement, occasionally invites young Omanis to international conferences and training programs. The movement, as its name suggests, encourages proselytizing among other Muslims.

[32] Eickelman interview, Muscat, 22 March 1988.

[33] “The Ways Ahead,” “Lectures file,” Office of the National Security Advisor.

[34] The ruler personally approved this change.

[35] Sura 27, al-Naml (“The Ant”), verses 15–40. Solomon summoned all the birds for review, but the hoopoe was absent. Solomon said he would punish Hud Hud severely unless he had a valid excuse.

But he was not long in coming, and reported:

“I have been around where you have not been.

I come from Saba [Sheba] with positive news.

I found a woman reigning over them ...” (Qur’an 27:22–23).

Hud Hud returned to Sheba with a letter from Solomon. The queen realized that Solomon’s religion was true and hers was not and submitted to him. War was thus averted and the value of secret knowledge and the influence of the invisible but real world underscored.

[36] Eickelman/Dennison interview, 11 August 1991.

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This article explores the relationship between the recent growth of mass higher education in the Arab Muslim world, particularly in Oman and North Africa, religious activism, and the implications of the “objectified” religious knowledge and authority that modern education encourages. Study of the new ways of knowing and the emerging networks for communication and action produced by mass higher education and contemporary religious

activism offers insight into the “political economy” of religious knowledge: the interplay of religion, politics, and national identity.

Keywords: Islam, Middle East, authority, religion, education

Mass higher education in the Arab and Muslim worlds is reshaping conceptions of self, religion, nation, and politics. It is as basic to reconfiguring notions of self and society in the Arab world of the late 20th century as was the introduction of printed books in 16th-century rural France (Davis 1975; see also Goody 1986; Stock 1983). Ironically, however, we know more about the uses of literacy in medieval and premodern Europe than in the contemporary Muslim and Arab worlds. Many scholars have noted linkages between advanced education and religious activism, but many take at face value the claims of religious activists, or “fundamentalists,” that they are reinstituting older forms of religious understanding and action rather than creating, even if inadvertently, new ones. The result is to deflect attention from both conceptual innovations and emerging networks for communication and action that affect virtually all Muslims and profoundly shape the direction of contemporary Muslim thought. Fundamentalism, the claims of its adherents notwithstanding, is a distinctively modern phenomenon (Lawrence 1989).

In this article I examine the “objectification” of the religious imagination in the Muslim Middle East, the process by which three kinds of questions come to be foregrounded in the consciousness of large numbers of believers: What is my religion? Why is it important to my life? and, How do my beliefs guide my conduct? Objectification does not mean seeing religion as a uniform or monolithic entity, although it is precisely that for some thinkers. I argue that these explicit and “objective” questions are distinctively modern ones that increasingly shape the discourse and practice of all Muslims, even as some legitimate their practices and beliefs by asserting a return to authentic established traditions. I focus on how, at this time in history and in certain contexts, religions have been objectified in the consciousness of many people. In part, this issue is easier to address than

why, but it is also more neglected. For something like religion to be objectified in people's consciousness, it must be discussed, and this entails discourse. If, for reasons of political intimidation or social deference, people do not discuss it directly, then it is discussed publicly for them by "experts" with whom they may or may not agree.

Distinctive to the modern era, this discourse and debate about tradition involve large numbers of people. They also necessarily involve an awareness of other Muslim and non-Muslim traditions, even if understandings of these other traditions are often distorted. Mass education and mass communication facilitate such awareness and, in changing the style and scale of possible discourse, reconfigure the nature of religious thought and action and encourage explicit debate over meaning. Although both mass education and mass communication are important in all contemporary world religions, the full effects of mass education, especially higher education, are just beginning to be felt in much of the Muslim world.

My approach in this article is not linear and evolutionary—in this respect it differs from Habermas' (1979), although it is inspired by his emphasis upon forms of communicative action in other respects—but contextual; I seek to describe the salient characteristics of an integrated cultural transformation. Bourdieu's (1988, 1989) studies of higher education, which explore correspondences and affinities among status, authority, and the "ways of knowing" inculcated by various educational institutions, can serve as a point of departure for understanding the dramatic transformations of religious authority that are occurring in much of the Muslim world today. Bourdieu is most effective in suggesting how the complex practices of educational institutions reproduce unequal relations of wealth and authority in society, but less so in showing how even repressive political systems leave room for contestation (Comaroff 1985). Indeed, some form of resistance to a society's central institutions would appear critical for sustaining the cultural construction of authoritative discourse, if only to co-opt sources of possible opposition and dissent. In this respect, Gramsci (1971) serves as a useful complement to Bourdieu, who emphasizes the reproduction of existing social arrangements. Although conceptually less tidy, Gramsci suggests that intellectuals and their discourse, although constrained by the established social order, never just reproduce it but create, even if inadvertently, the seeds of resistance and contestation. In order to focus on the development of

new “authoritative” discourses and resistance to them, I seek to place such discourses in their specific historical and political contexts.

Some elements of contemporary Islamic ideologies deflect attention away from such specific contexts. Muslims conventionally represent themselves as “people of the book,” yet until recently most Muslims—and certainly those in the Middle East—were not sufficiently literate to read or directly comprehend the Qur’an or other religious texts. Nonetheless, the idea of the book and the text has long pervaded many social contexts. In this respect, the uses of literacy and of the spoken and written word in the Arab “core” of the Muslim world strongly resemble those in the so-called Muslim periphery (see, for example, Lambek 1990). Even where texts are not present, people behave as if they are. The idea of the book, by analogy with the divine text of the Qur’an (Pederson 1984), conveys for many Muslims the idea that valued knowledge is fixed and memorizable. In Morocco, the cognitive style associated with Islamic knowledge remains closely tied to popular understandings of Islam and has important analogies in nonreligious spheres of knowledge (Eickelman 1978, 1985).

Memorization of the Qur’an continues to be a virtually unquestioned form of cultural capital for Moroccans, although few still memorize it in its entirety, as was common for an earlier generation. Qur’anic memorization served as a paradigm for subsequent learning in the religious sciences as well as in other fields of knowledge; ideally, texts were mnemonically “possessed.” Beginning in the 1920s and 1930s, the Moroccan elite began to send their sons to the schools of the French Protectorate. As this occurred, the prestige of Islamic higher education, left increasingly to students from rural regions, suffered a rapid decline, although the popular idea of knowledge as fixed and memorizable still prevailed (Eickelman 1978,1985; cf. Berque 1938, 1974). The advent of mass higher education since the 1970s, however, challenges this paradigm and offers an alternative cognitive style.

*** Religiosity and mass higher education

Major changes in basic religious or political perceptions often occur incrementally and are not perceived as significant at the time. Only in

retrospect are they recognized as sharp breaks with the past. Discussing ties of dependence in feudal Europe, Marc Bloch (1964:148) wrote that successive generations¬¬ did not consciously create new social forms but instead gave rise to them “in the process of trying to adapt the old.” Much the same can be said of mass higher education. Even when mass higher education is used to sustain old patterns of belief and authority, its very structure engenders new “authoritative” ways of thinking about self, religion, and politics.

For the most part, mass higher education is a recent phenomenon in the Middle East. It began in earnest only in the 1950s. Fifteen to twenty years later, after large numbers of students had begun to complete its advanced cycles, its consequences could be more clearly discerned. In Egypt the number of primary school pupils more than doubled in the decade following the 1952 revolution. Corresponding increases in secondary and university education began in the mid- 1960s (see Figure 1). The timing of educational expansion varies for other parts of the Middle East. Major educational expansion in Morocco began in the 1960s (World Bank 1981–89). In Oman, a case to be considered in detail here, educational opportunities began to expand significantly only in the 1970s. In 1972–73 there were 25,000 students at all levels in Oman. By 1982–83 there were 142,000, and by 1987–88, 276,000. In 1975–76, a mere 22 students were enrolled in secondary education within Oman. By 1987–88 this number had risen to 13,500.

[[d-f-dale-f-eickelman-mass-higher-education-and-the-1.jpg][Figure 1. Egypt, Morocco, and Oman: secondary and postsecondary school enrollments, 1950–87.]]

In postsecondary education, a critical mass among Omanis emerged only in the late 1980s (Oman 1979–89).[1]

A complementary measure of change is book production. As of 1982, the Arab world was producing 40 books per million inhabitants, far below the world average of 162 titles per million. Although more recent figures are unavailable, the gap appears to be closing rapidly (Khalil Sabat, cited in

Gonzalez-Quijano 1989:18). Likewise, the first cohort of Moroccans to benefit from mass higher education in Arabic, as opposed to French, and to have acquired their pervasive “habits of thought” (Bourdieu 1988, 1989; Sabour 1988) in the country’s national language is creating a demand for the “re-imagining” (Anderson 1983) of Islam and national identity. Only in the last few years has a significant readership for “quality” books in Arabic developed in Morocco (Albin 1990). For the increasingly influential cohort of university graduates, reading is a means of “appropriating” (Chartier 1987:6–11), organizing, and making objective ideas of society, religion, and self.

authoritative discourse With the spread of mass higher education in the Muslim world, access to the Qur’an, as well as to other books and the ways of knowing inculcated by them, has shifted in form. Religious authority in earlier generations derived from the mastery of authoritative texts studied under recognized scholars. Mass education fosters a direct, albeit selective, access to the printed word and a break with earlier traditions of authority. As Hassan al-Turabi (cited in Piscatori 1986:19), the Sorbonne-educated leader of the Muslim Brothers in the Sudan and a former attorney general, has said, “Because all knowledge is divine and religious, a chemist, an engineer, an economist, [and] a jurist are all ulama [religious scholars].” Thus, the privileged position of traditionally educated religious scholars has eroded. Although religious activism has many sources, it appeals mainly to those who have benefited from modern education. In 1953, for example, only 22 percent of the Egyptian Muslim Brothers were not of the educated urban middle classes (Piscatori 1986:29). In the occupied West Bank after 1967, the occupying authorities encouraged religious activism in order to counter secular nationalism; belatedly they discovered that popular religious protest offered an equally if not more tenacious opposition to their authority. As early as 1979, a poll at one West Bank university indicated that 43 percent of the students identified themselves with fundamentalist rather than with secular nationalist organizations. Throughout the occupied territories, youths “with a relatively high educational level” are the core of these groups (Legrain 1986:229). Muslim fundamentalist discourse, such as that of Morocco’s cAbd as-Salam YasTn (Yassine 1981), assumes a familiarity with the language of Marxist and other “Western” discourses, against which it confidently reacts. Belief and practice are now expressed in public and explicit forms and are more directly related to political action than they previously were.

Sayyid Qutb’s 1981 Ma^alim fi-l-tarlq (Signposts), said to be the most widely read book among younger Muslims worldwide, would never have had the impact it did without the spread of mass education and the access to analytical and exegetical texts that such education provides. In Iran, the Friday sermon has become the focal political event: in it, government speakers explain policies, problems, and events of the week to audiences much wider than any assembled during the Shah’s regime, notwithstanding the Pahlavi state’s full control over mass communications. These sermons often refer to published sources and arguments for authority, implying an audience familiar with texts and the principles of citation. Not all of the audience can follow such arguments in detail, but they recognize the forms of authority. Even the nonreligious and the antireligious are obliged to follow the sermons to remain abreast of political developments, and the sermons themselves presume an awareness of world events and an ability to understand policy.

religion as system and object A second consequence of mass higher education is perhaps most evident from contemporary fundamentalist discourse, in which religious beliefs are seen as systems to be distinguished from one another. The fundamentalist thinker Sayyid Qutb, executed by Nasser in 1966, described Islam as a “system” (minhaj) of beliefs and doctrines. Qutb saw Islam as self-contained; yet thinking of religion in this way makes it possible to borrow from other systems and to incorporate changes (Shepard 1989:45–46), thereby increasing the system’s viability. When fundamentalists declare that they are engaged in the “Islamization” of their society, they make explicit their sense of religious beliefs as an objective system. Thus, since the 1980s Moroccans have commonly referred to activists as “the Muslims” (al-musli- mun). Irony is far from absent, since all but about 20,000 of Morocco’s 26 million citizens are Muslim.

language and community Finally, the standardized language of mass higher education encourages new senses of community and affinity. Anderson (1983) argues, for example, that the rise of written vernacular languages in Europe since the 16th century and the spread of print technology have created language communities wider than

those of face-to-face interactions yet narrower than the communities created by shared sacred languages. With modifications, this premise can be transposed to many Islamic contexts.

One indication of shifts in the religious imagination of a younger, educated generation in many parts of the Middle East is the effort of the state to co-opt fundamentalist discourse. In Morocco in the 1960s and early 1970s, both the monarchy and its political opposition employed a “developmentalist” idiom in which “religious” issues were separated from “political” ones. By the late 1970s, the public language of the monarchy’s supporters was much more religiously oriented, and the monarch asserted that he was developing a cadre of Ministry of the Interior officials trained in administration and Islamic thought. He claimed that his political actions were modeled upon those of the Prophet Muhammad:

In all modesty, Hassan’s school is the school of Muhammad V,... and the school of Muhammad V is that of the Prophet.... Most of us know the Prophet only as messenger of God.... His political and diplomatic life remain unknown and we await the day when someone firmly attached to his religion and proud of its teachings will write on this subject. [Hassan II 1984:162]

From North Africa to Jordan, Egypt, and Turkey, the impact of modern mass education is pervasive. In the context of a set national curriculum in which Islamic studies is one subject among many, students are taught about the unity of Muslim thought and practice. An impersonal relation between students and curriculum is stressed, and matters of controversy among Muslims are excluded. Even while teaching that Islam permeates all aspects of life, the formal principles of Islamic doctrine and practice are compartmentalized and made an object of study. As mentioned earlier, Sayyid Qutb employed terms such as “curriculum” (minhaj) to describe Muslim doctrine as a system of closely related beliefs and principles. This pervasive notion of system is a profoundly new element in modern religious thought, as are the catechisms that are now becoming common for many Muslims, including IbadT Muslims, who, together with the better-known and more numerous SunnT and ShTca, form the third major doctrinal cluster (madhhab) in the wider Islamic community. Such catechisms help their schooled users to understand the key thinkers of

their tradition and to explain doctrinal tenets to other Muslims (for example, Acusht 1982).[2]

*** Religion and education in Oman

The adoption of mass higher education in Oman is sufficiently recent that I was able to witness its beginning in the late 1970s. Schooling became widely available after the 1970 palace coup in which Qabus bin SacTd replaced his father, SacTd bin Taymur (r. 1932–70), as ruler. By the early 1980s Oman had a sufficient number of secondary school graduates, members of the armed services and civilian government with in-service training, and university students abroad (and, since the opening of Sultan Qaboos University in 1986, in Oman itself) to engender a transformation in what constitutes authoritative religious discourse. The shift to a print- and cassette-based religiosity and the exposure of large numbers of young Omanis to a written, formal, “modern standard” Arabic through schooling and the mass media have altered the style and content of authoritative religious discourse and the role it plays in shaping and constraining domestic and regional politics (Eickelman 1987a, 1989).

The overall trend has been one of turning away from situating meaning in local and immediate ritual and symbolic contexts in which—to cite an accountof a contemporary Mayan community in Guatemala—“meaning comes to rest more on usage than on referentiality; learning consists of improvisation rather than rationalization; and mastery of form ultimately takes precedence over understanding of content” (Watanabe 1992:99; for Sumatra, see Bowen 1991). Instead, meaning becomes situated in explicit statements of belief inseparable from the study of texts, or at least an invocation of them. Because the discourse of Oman’s mufti, Shaykh Ahmad bin Hamad al-KhalTlT, is authorized, frequent, and publicly accessible, it provides an accurate reading of contemporary religious trends even as it reflects and responds to competing Muslim voices.

For example, when in 1986 a senior religious authority in Saudi Arabia issued a fatwa (authoritative religious interpretation) that was interpreted as hostile to the Ibadiyya, al-KhalTlT, who is IbadT, responded in

a nationally televised address by invoking specific texts and thinkers as his authorities. Indeed, the perceived attack from an unsympathetic Muslim authority was part of an overall pattern of competing Muslim discourses shaped by discursive texts (see Eickelman 1989). The major difference between the Ibadiyya of Oman and their counterparts in Algeria and Libya is that modern educational opportunities came last to Oman. Students and other Omanis have looked to the mufti to formulate appropriate ways of explaining IbadT interpretations of Islam to other Muslims. These students constitute the mufti's primary audience, since the mufti speaks publicly in formal Arabic, not in colloquial Omani, and quotes the Qur'an and religious texts in classical Arabic. Therefore, when he appears in public or on television, the majority of his auditors or viewers listen with admiration but are unable to follow his arguments in detail or explain them to others.

In short, older styles of understanding religious authority coexist with newer ones. Many of the mufti's television viewers, like his audiences at his frequent public appearances throughout the country, accept his religious authority because of his context and style, not because they can follow his arguments in modern formal Arabic or his quotations from classical Arabic. The context of the mufti's televised address was an improvised religious "lesson" (dars) broadcast from a Sultan Qaboos University lecture hall filled with leading educators, religious scholars, and students, none of whom posed questions. Nonetheless, the "lesson" prompted discussion among educated Omanis throughout the country in the following weeks.

The context of the mufti's televised response suggests how texts and authorities reformulate the contemporary sense of community. As one ShTcT Omani merchant commented:

<quote>

All Omanis stood with the mufti after his televised address. Before it, we heard rumors of [the dispute]. The attack on [the mufti] had nothing to do with sects in Islam. He was attacked as an Omani, and that is how we

understood [his] words. It was a national issue, [interview, London, 16 June 1987]

</quote>

The heightened sense of debate within the Muslim community fosters the development of explicit statements of belief and practice. Indeed, Oman's mufti rarely puts his ideas in writing himself, but they are frequently promulgated through cassettes and public addresses that are later transcribed (and occasionally translated) for people to use in discussing Islam with other Muslims or in representing Omani religious traditions to outsiders (al-KhalTlT 1988, 1989). One cassette, for example, responds to a letter from an Omani student in the United States who had written the mufti that some of his "Sunni brothers" had warned against allowing IbadTs to lead prayers or participate "in the administration of our mosques and Islamic Centers in this place on the claim that they are a section of the Khawarij," an early Islamic revolutionary sect that advocated death for Muslims not adhering strictly to its tenets. The student had asked for guidance in responding to such claims and had inquired as to "the reason for not circulating [IbadT] books and references in the libraries and in the Muslim Universities" (al-KhalTlT 1988:1).

Religiously minded younger Omanis, especially those who take seriously the critiques of contemporary Arab and Muslim fundamentalist and radical thinkers such as the late Sayyid Qutb, find Shaykh al-KhalTlT's arguments persuasive. The mufti, despite the fact that he holds a government sinecure, approvingly cites books banned in Oman, giving the appearance of autonomy from state censorship and control. As in Egypt (Mitchell 1990), state authorities, by "authorizing" some radical discourse, encompass and control it. Omanis harbor few illusions that Shaykh al-KhalTlT's invocation of prohibited literature will have any effect on its continued interdiction. The mufti's discourse shows how a spokesperson for the ruling elite can co-opt discourse of the opposition, including Marxism, and integrate some traditional practices, such as the dars, into modern contexts in order to sustain authority. Some of the mufti's most biting critiques are offered as quotations or paraphrases from other writers, which distances him from formulations he nonetheless offers with approval. Shaykh al-KhalTlT is careful

to specify authors, titles, page numbers, and often even publishers—a form of citation familiar to members of his audience with a modern education but absent from traditional religious discourse.

Shaykh al-KhalTlT's discourse is almost exclusively oral, so that even newspaper summaries of his views are edited by others (for example, al-KharusT 1988). He regularly travels throughout the Sultanate, meeting with religious notables, and draws large crowds for his public lessons. When the ruler ordered special prayers in support of the Palestinian people in March 1988, the mufti led the congregation in one of Oman's largest mosques. Through regular radio programs and a weekly newspaper column he offers fatwas in response to queries from Omanis. Shaykh al-KhalTlT's frequent participation in international Islamic conferences—in Jidda, in Cairo, and at Sultan Qaboos University in February and March 1988 alone—is extensively reported. In addition to undertaking this heavy schedule of speaking, the mufti plays a pivotal role in committees that shape public religious expression in schools, the media, and the "suggested" texts for Friday sermons. Again, however, these sermons are in formal Arabic, and thus their specific content is understood only by traditionally educated religious scholars and those who have received.a modern education.

Shaykh al-KhalTlT's articulation of Islamic issues contrasts sharply with the pattern that prevailed in Oman until the 1970s. For the Ibadiyya, the older pattern was sustained by an interlocking universe of religious notables whose literary output centered on poetry and tribal histories that were circulated largely in manuscript form among the educated elite (see Eickelman 1983). Alternative constructions of Islam and of Muslim identity were marginal concerns. Textual references were primarily to Omani scholars and did not reflect debate or confrontation with the wider Muslim community. For instance, in Oman of the 1920s and 1930s, the presence of the prominent Tripolitanian IbadT writer and Arab nationalist Sulayman al-Baruni (1870–1940) had no significant influence on the form of religious discourse (Peterson 1988). In many parts of Oman, SunnT, ShTcT, and IbadT communities were closely intertwined, but their relations were of juxtaposition rather than of dialogue and interaction. Members of each community were aware of the religious practices of the others, but this awareness did not engender a systematic formulation of sectarian

distinctions. This awareness came to the forefront with the introduction of modern education.

Until the last two decades, IbadT, SunnT, and ShTcT doctrines and practices were not explicitly thought of as systems that could be compared and contrasted. What was practiced was assumed to be Islamic, pure and simple. Omanis were, of course, aware of other Muslim communities, some very close at hand, but the other communities and their interpretations of doctrine and practice were at the periphery of the moral imagination of religious intellectuals and others.

The intensification of government services, education, and control since 1970 has heightened people's imagination of Oman as a political community (Anderson 1983:15–16), with territorial limits and spheres of authority accepted by both the ruler's supporters and his opponents. Although this transformation accelerated after 1970, it was well under way before then. Sultan SacTd may have been a reactionary in the last decades of his rule, but his repressive actions brought a new unity to Oman's diverse sectarian and ethnic population: their dislike of him engendered a sense of unity that could not be broken even by enticements from neighboring countries then opposed to Oman (United Nations 1965). The government of Sultan SacTd may have been weak in scale, scope, and services, but it provided a clearly defined center against which its opponents united as Omanis. In 1965 a United Nations team that had conducted extensive interviews with Omani exiles in Saudi Arabia, Cairo, and elsewhere concluded:

<quote>

Most persons interviewed made it clear that they would prefer to see Oman united as one country. Some had in mind the unification of the territories previously controlled by the Sultan and the Imam, while others wished to see the Trucial Sheikhdoms also included as part of the future Oman. One person said that there was no Muscat, only Oman.[3] Another said that people from Oman and from Muscat were all Omanis.... Oman had been one country before its division and it should be one country again. [United Nations 1965:65]

</quote>

In post-1970 Oman, the state has heightened the sense of national identity by vastly expanding education, the bureaucracy, the police, military and security services, and business opportunities, and by providing infrastructure and communication facilities. In textbooks and formal discourse, Omanis are treated as “citizens” (al-muwatinun), a role with implied obligations to and reciprocal expectations of the state, the ruler, and his close associates. “Nation” (watan) in the northern Oman interior no longer primarily means one’s community or tribal territory but Oman itself. Many young Omanis perceive the obligations and expectations framed by the state’s new rhetoric as hypocritical, but this rhetoric nonetheless forms the articulated standard by which policies and decisions are justified. Indeed, requesting the government to adhere to its stated principles is a tolerated form of dissent.

Mass education has had a major impact on the style of religiosity of younger Omanis, even as state authorities seek to use education to preserve “traditional” values and to distance religion from the political sphere. At its most basic, the style of intellectual technology introduced by modern schooling constitutes a significant break with the earlier emphasis upon the written word, mediated by an oral tradition and oriented toward a mastery of accepted religious texts acquired through study under religious scholars recognized by the wider community. At least in formal terms, a curriculum of specifically delineated subjects and prescribed texts is taught by a changing array of teachers, and competence is measured by examination. Nonetheless, as seen in the iconic value of the mufti among Omanis who cannot follow his lessons in formal Arabic, replete with spoken references and page citations, the older style of religiosity exists alongside the new one and is selectively incorporated into contemporary dominant discourse.

The prescribed curriculum has made Islamic studies a nonsectarian subject. This “generic” Islam includes such topics as the Prophet Muhammad’s life and those of his sayings (hadith) that Sunni, IbadT, and ShTcT Muslims all accept as authentic. As a consequence, the curriculum includes

no discussion of the development of Ibadism or of major doctrinal divisions within the Muslim community. The same “generic” Islam is propagated in Omani newspapers and periodicals and in the Friday sermons carried on Oman radio and television.

An unintended consequence of making Islam a part of the curriculum is to make it a subject that must be “explained” and “understood.” Yet treating Islam as a system of beliefs and practices implicitly highlights differences within the Muslim community. Thus, one Omani from the interior, now a police official, recalled his experiences as a boarder at a secondary school in the late 1970s, his first close association with Omanis from sects other than his own:

<quote>

In religion classes, the teachers, who were mostly Egyptian, were careful to cite only sayings of the Prophet that were accepted by all the sects [madhahib]. Once, when a teacher quoted one not accepted as authentic by the Shfa, they walked out of class and staged a protest. We never discussed sectarian matters in class; that was forbidden. In the dormitories, our discussions were often intense. Our purpose wasn’t to convince others to change their sect [madhhab], but to make the best argument possible for our side [taraf/na]. [interview, New York, 20 May 1985]

</quote>

Such discussion requires participants to emphasize the distinctive features of their beliefs. The previously cited letter from a student to Shaykh al-KhalTlT indicates that the awareness of sectarian differences is further accentuated when Omanis participate in religious activities with their counterparts, sometimes perceived as hostile or misinformed, from Muslim groups outside Oman.

Participation in Muslim associations and study groups as well as exposure to video and audio cassettes and the literature of various groups also shifts shared perceptions of Islamic thought and the context in which it is shaped. Ready access to the printed word and to expositions of Islamic doctrine in transnational Arabic (as opposed to regional and local dialects) largely derives from modern mass education, radio, television, and cassettes and is fairly recent for most Omanis. The state creates and sustains a communications network that touches the lives of most citizens. In other cases the state interdicts certain communications or expressions of opinion.

The movement to institute Friday sermons at mosques throughout Oman in the 1980s constituted a subtle challenge to state authority. At the same time it illustrated the importance of the shift from ritual to explicit statements of belief. Among the Ibadiyya of Oman's northern interior, only the imam in Nizwa offered Friday sermons prior to the "new era." As young Omanis became educated, however, many of them led movements to have Friday sermons read in mosques throughout the interior, as is now done. One of Oman's first generation of village schoolteachers observed of the northern Oman interior, "People here do not know Islam; they pray and sacrifice, but they do not know why" (interview, Nizwa region, 9 March 1988). Before the mid-1970s, statements such as this would have been almost incomprehensible in most towns and villages, but by the late 1980s they had become so common that older persons, who disagreed with the notion that "being Muslim" entailed an ability to articulate a credo, could "interpret" such comments for me and could identify the characteristics of those most likely to voice them: younger, educated Omanis.

This nascent intelligentsia is independent of state authority and often skeptical of it, pointing out discrepancies between what they see as the law of the Sultanate and the prescriptions of Islamic law (sharica). Yet these critics are products of the modern state, educated and employed by it, and they concur with the state, at least for the present, on the limits of public discourse. The mufti's allusions to earlier forms of—and deviations from—Islamic rule are applied by some of his audience to contemporary local situations. At the same time, however, the mufti is the Omani representative to the Islamic Conference Organization and other international religious bodies. Even arrangements for the hajj (the pilgrimage to Mecca) pass through governmental organizations and are bound by

regulations established by state authorities. In 1987, the minister of justice announced plans to coordinate “objective” programs in religious education, sermons, and media discussion of religious issues “to enlighten the public on religious matters and to urge the believers to fulfil their obligations” (Times of Oman 1987). It could be misleading to speak of an Omani, Pakistani, Saudi, French, and Moroccan Islam, but the boundaries, administrative and economic ties, and traditions of national entities implicitly shape religious discourse, just as a print-oriented, modernist Islam induces the specific discussion of sectarian divergences. In Oman as in other countries, much Islamic literature circulates in samizdat form, not because it is “subversive” in the sense of attacking the state, but because it has not found explicit approval. For example, one Algerian book (Acusht 1982) provides a catechism of IbadT beliefs and “correct” sources and indicates its “stand-alone” nature by appending a glossary of key historical events, personalities, and theological terms (kalamiyya) so that interested readers can acquire a “proper” understanding without the tutorials of traditional

Islamic learning. Such books had no audience in Oman a decade ago and were not in local circulation.

*** Conclusion

Oman provides a recent example of a general shift to a religious activism that marginalizes the authority of traditional religious leaders, a trend paralleled elsewhere among both Muslim and non-Muslim populations, including those in Indonesia (Bowen 1991:242–257; Hefner 1987) and India (Madan 1987; Wood 1985). With this transformation, religious authority shifts from elite specialists recognized as masters of religious texts and often inaccessible rhetorical forms to religious and political activists who seek open religious discussion and action and whose authority is based upon persuasion and the interpretation of accessible texts. This shift reshapes national cultures and politics because it constitutes a critique of arbitrary state authority and questions state efforts, as in Oman and Morocco, to co-opt religious activism.

While the full political concomitants of the shift are beyond the scope of this article, there are indications among ShTcT Arab intellectuals in the Gulf, for example, that even the Qur’an is no longer invoked as an unquestioned source for the legitimation of democratic moves, because, as an Arab Gulf businessman put it, “terms such as ‘consultation’ [shura] occur only infrequently and do not constitute a fully developed political theory” (interview, Washington, DC, 27 April 1990). Such a statement implies a reading and analysis of the Qur’an as a text and an explicit notion of theory and interpretation.

The new forms of religious understanding are pervasive but do not inexorably displace older forms. Elements of traditional religious understandings often survive in altered form. Many aspects of madrasa (mosque school) education remain significant. In Morocco, for example, the models of peer learning in madrasa education and in religious brotherhoods have been taken over by religious activists, who are often obliged to meet surreptitiously because of state sanctions against them.

The monarchy, for its part, uses the QarawiyTn mosque-university to train senior administrators in the religious sciences in an effort to accord the state greater legitimacy; and religious lessons, often with the monarch in attendance, are broadcast nightly throughout Ramadan, the Muslim lunar month of fasting (Eickelman 1987b:91). In some parts of rural Morocco, wealthy Muslims sponsor small madrasas, in which men of learning who congregate to study religious texts in the older mnemonic tradition are fed and lodged at the patron’s expense. Fanny Colonna (personal communication, 1975) observed that in the Gurara region of southern Algeria, known for its tradition of religious learning, Qur’anic schooling was considered better adapted to local needs than the schooling provided by the state. Support for Qur’anic schooling thus also served as a vehicle for contesting state authority.

Madrasas in Iran now serve as places to train the political elite, a reversal of their role before the 1979 revolution, when many madrasa students were dropouts from secular higher education, which required them to pass entrance examinations (Richard 1991:214, 248–249; personal communication, 1987). Because they are

trained in both traditional and modern schools, young Iranian mullahs are able to “bridge” religious styles, utilizing aspects of both forms of religious expression as circumstances warrant. Text-based religious activism may constitute a new dominant religiosity, but this does not prevent its carriers from selectively incorporating older forms. Elsewhere, as in the Arabian peninsula and in an Islamicizing Pakistan, jurists and teachers of the religious sciences for all levels of state education receive highly modified forms of what is nonetheless called “traditional” Islamic education.

The Prophet Muhammad’s contemporaries, whose lives bridged the pre-Islamic age of ignorance and the age of Islam, were called mukhadrams. Moroccan intellectuals now in their forties sometimes apply this term to themselves. Many shared the hope of imminent political and economic reform in the heady years after independence. Now they share a disenchantment with the commitment to reform of an earlier generation, having seen that the end of colonial domination, like the enthusiasms for secular ideologies in the 1960s and early 1970s, brought no significant transformations. Some have placed their hopes in the new forms of religiosity with their implicit promise of reform and renewal. Many, however, do so in a way critically different from that of their predecessors. They apply the term mukhadram to themselves, but also point out how their practical understanding of religion differs from that of their 7th-century counterparts. They are not just conscious of adhering to (or reacting against) innovative forms of religious belief and practice; they also think of these new forms as systems that can be differentiated from others and consciously reworked. This consciousness of form prevents authoritative knowledge from being monolithic and states from co-opting an objectified Islam for themselves: alternatives can always be envisaged, even as the determinative power of historical context is recognized. As antipathetic as some contemporary Muslim religious activists say they are to the “West,” they nonetheless share with those who live in the West a commitment to texts, analysis, synthesis, and personal authority that draws upon their own traditions and heritage.

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[1] The statistics given here and in Figure 1 are necessarily approximate, as countries frequently change their classifications of educational institutions. In smaller countries such as Oman, students in military and police academies and in specialized courses sponsored by government ministries are excluded from the statistics on secondary and postsecondary education. Further, students whose education is supported by private funds, a significant phenomenon in a state with oil revenues, are underreported.

[2] Ibadi Muslims constitute just under half of Oman’s indigenous population of about 1.1 million. Significant IbadT communities are also found in East Africa, Libya, and southern Algeria. Non-lbadT examples of catechisms include Hamidullah 1959, intended as a “correspondence course on Islam” and available in several languages, and Soymen 1979, translated from Turkish into English as a “manual” for English-speaking Muslims.

[3] The country’s official name until 1970 was the Sultanate of Muscat and Oman, reflecting a de facto division of the northern half of the country from 1913, following a religious uprising in the northern interior, to 1955 (the coast was controlled by the sultan, the interior by a theocratic IbadT imam). In 1955, with British support, the northern interior was assimilated into the sultan’s domains and the imam fled into exile in Saudi Arabia. A major uprising two years later required British

intervention to suppress. From 1957 to 1970, Arab League supporters of the /mam-in-exile urged the United Nations to recognize Oman’s northern interior as an independent state.

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“Foundation’ texts—great works of literature or religion or the writings, sayings, and life histories of “exemplary* persons—pose a paradox. For success, they must captivate the imagination of their audience of origin with their immediacy and significance. If these texts or ideas do not articulate closely enough to their initial social settings, they are likely to be regarded by their potential audiences “as irrelevant, unrealistic, artificial, and overly abstract.”[1] But if these texts and ideas are too closely bound to their original settings, no matter how persuasive they are for their original audience, they are soon “likely to be thought of as esoteric, parochial, time bound and fail to attract a wider and more lasting audience.”[2] Who today remembers the Millerites or the other religious movements of the “awakening” in the “burned-over” regions of upstate New York in the 1840s? One movement, founded by Joseph Smith, prospered and grew; the others are known to specialists alone.[3] Foundation texts and the ideas that they advance must transcend the immediate circumstances in which they were introduced and remain relevant to the diverse contexts of succeeding generations.

Robert Wuthnow has addressed this problem of “articulation” in his exploration of three leading ideas of the European experience—the Reformation, the Enlightenment, and European socialism. My point of departure for the Muslim majority world is the Qur’anic commentary of Bediiizzaman Said Nursi (1876–1960), a religious intellectual whose writings

and experience bridged the last years of the caliphate and the rapidly evolving politics and economics of the Turkish republic. Both participants in the Nur movement and observers of it write of the revolutionary “Old Said” (1887–1923), who criticized oppressive Ottoman policies “in the name of Islam” and argued the compatibility of Islam and constitutionalism, and the “New Said” (1923–1960), focused on “the role of faith in the formation of the person and a just society.”[4] The style and strategy of Qur’anic commentaries—who produces them, in what contexts, and for what audiences—offer insight into how interpreters of basic texts, including sacred texts, bridge differing times and situations and shape new senses of community and society. Nursi’s ideas and style of presentation evolved significantly over time and reached highly diverse audiences at different times in his career and after his death. An examination of Nursi’s ideas also suggests changing notions of public space in Turkey.

A comparison between the foundation texts of the last half millennium in Europe with recent texts of Qur’anic interpretation might at first appear an unpromising terrain on which to explore the evolving nature of the public sphere and the role of intellectuals in contemporary societies. After all, Islamic scholars pride themselves on continuity with past commentary and the integral and authentic transmission of the ideas of the past. Altering this tradition of learning and infusing new ideas into it is therefore a formidable task, so that many contributors to this tradition deny that they are offering new approaches.[5] This is all the more reason to focus on Nursi. While Nursi and his biographers stress many of the modernist aspects of his work and thought—especially his critical and reflective attitude to texts—Nursi’s example as interpreted by many of his followers builds on the legitimacy of established master patterns of learning. Thus, one biographer relates that during Nursi’s two years in the town of Bitlis as a guest of the governor, he began to memorize the “greater part” of the Qur’an but did not complete the task. One reason was his perception that reciting the Qur’an at great speed showed a lack of respect. Another was Nursi’s sense that the greatest priority was to learn and to communicate “the truths that the Qur’an was teaching.” Yet, he learned by heart in this same period some forty works on the Islamic sciences and philosophy which provided a “key to the Qur’anic truths.”[6] Likewise, his relation to Sufi orders demonstrates a constructive ambiguity, regarding them with respect as a stage in “witnessing” religious truths but inferior to reliance on the Qur’an and revelation.[7]

A prime example of Nursi’s style of innovation is the style of Qur’anic commentary as embedded in the 2?jsaJe-j Nur. It offers insight on the emerging public sphere in Muslim societies, in which larger numbers of individuals take part in discussion and debate on civic and religious values and responsibilities, and on the role of religious intellectuals in contemporary societies in general. It also has implications for understanding the continuing role in European societies of religious intellectuals and their continuing contribution to public space and civil society. Early versions of the modernization theory, a dominant mode of thought from the late 1940s through the 1970s and still influential today, deflected attention from the public role of religious intellectuals such as Nursi. Thus, Edward Shils, an influential contributor to European social thought, wrote that intellectuals were necessarily active at the sacred center of societies in the premodern era, although religious orientations in “modern” times attract “a diminishing share of the creative capacities of the oncoming intellectual elite.”[8] More recent approaches reaffirm the value of thinking of “multiple modernities” rather than a single path to modernity of the form favored by some thinkers in the 1950s and 1960s,[9] and it is in these later approaches that the significance of Nursi’s work and example stands out.

*** Nursi and the Issue 0f “Articulation”

The writings and biography of Said Nursi offer a fascinating and rich perspective for understanding religion in the modern world and how ideas can transcend their immediate historical and social contexts. His ideas are all the more interesting because most of them can be dated, and thus can be situated in specific times and contexts. I first became acquainted with Nursi and his writings from conversations with a friend and colleague, Sherif Mardin. He asked me to read his book in manuscript, first in the late 1970s, and again in the mid-1980s. Only in 1989 was this book finally published, and the reasons for this protracted delay say much about the significance of Mardin’s choice of a biography of Nursi as a way of assessing the role of religious intellectuals in Turkish society.[10] Letters and conversations with Mardin both prior to the publication of his book and more recently make clear why he found the book so difficult to write. First, his approach differed remarkably from the basic tenets of the political “modernization” theory

prevalent in the 1950s and 1960s, which assumed the progressively diminishing role of religious thought and practice in a “modernizing” society. This was the tradition of political science into which Mardin was academically socialized. In contrast to this prevalent view, Mardin gradually came to see modernization as a complex process of interaction in which religion and culture were subtly intertwined with economic development and the other requirements of modern societies.[11]

Mardin also faced a second challenge. His account of Nursi’s career embodied Turkey’s major social and political transformations from the late nineteenth through the mid-twentieth century. In assessing the role of a major religious intellectual in this transformation, Mardin was tackling not only a major conceptual tradition in political theory; he was also simultaneously joining an intensive and politically charged debate among Turkish intellectuals concerning the defining features of modern Turkish society. Mardin’s book is one of the most innovative of his long career, breaking both with the conventional political science of his time and chai-lenging Turkish and other intellectuals to reconsider conventional assumptions about modern Turkish society. Moreover, by the time Mardin’s book was published, the Nur movement had entered a new phase of both growth and fragmentation, involving a growing public and civic role and competition over his ideological legacy.[12] Thus, Mardin’s book addressed concerns not only of an academic audience, but one of the key issues in Turkey today, the role of religion in the public sphere.

An underlying element in the style of Nursi’s writings, from relatively early ones such as the 1911 Damascus sermon to the later commentaries on the Qur’an contained in The Flashes Collection,[13] is that they are distinctly modern, encouraging the reader to question and enter into an active and critical engagement with the text. Some of his followers may demonstrate some attributes of Sufi piety and reverence and even point to miracles Nursi performed, but the core of his legacy is the development of reason within the framework of Islamic belief, piety, and practice. Traditional forms of Qur’anic exegesis emphasized the text and its philological aspects, taking the underlying values and subject of the text seriously but ignoring the social and political contexts which shaped its interpretation and its practical application. In a “modern” approach, various bodies of knowledge are combined and recombined according to occasion by each seeker after

truth, rather than transmitted intact as a complete corpus from generation to generation. This modern approach is clear from the outset of Nursi’s career. As a student, he went restlessly from medrese to medrese, ending with a three-month course with Shaykh Mehmed Celali in Bayezit. Mardin quotes Nursi as saying to Celali, “The treasures (of learning) you control are in a strongbox. You have its key. What I need is a clue to its contents. I will choose whatever I find appropriate.”[14]

Mardin doubts that Said “could actually have used such direct language” to an established and respected teacher,[15] but Nursi’s distinctly modern approach to knowledge is apparent in his Qur’anic commentaries. Nursi’s approach to knowledge, both in direct commentary on Qur’anic verses and in other writings, placed greater emphasis on combining forms of knowledge and exegesis previously unconsidered. In contrast, traditional tafsirdxA not allow “for the type of permutations and combinations which were the stuff of modern Western science.”[16]

The older tradition of Islamic learning placed great emphasis on rote learning, face-to-face contacts in learning and teaching, and personal contact between shaykh and disciple.[17] Some of these elements are present also in the Nursi tradition as popularly practiced. Nursi himself, however, stressed the importance of direct contact with texts and encouraged his followers to adopt his own approach, which emphasized exploring multiple combinations of knowledge, including those outside the Islamic tradition. In 1910, a policeman in Tiflis, asking Nursi about his plans for building a medrese, said that it was hopeless to envision a unity of the “broken up and fragmented” Muslim world. Nursi replied: “They have gone to study. It is like this: India is an able son of Islam; it is studying in the high school of the British. Egypt is a clever son of Islam; it is taking lessons in the British schools for civil servants. Caucasia and Turkestan are two valiant sons of Islam; they are training in the Russian war academy. And so on.”[18]

This direct approach permeates Nursi’s commentaries on the Qur’an, notwithstanding his heavy reliance on metaphor and parable. For example, Nursi’s commentary on Surat al-Fath (48:27–9) about seven sorts of prediction concerning the Unseen, builds phrase by phrase on the cited

verses, adding historical context to the narrative to make its meaning clear.[19] In other interpretations, such as Surat al-Aaraf (7:31), “Eat and drink, but waste not by excess,” wa-kulu wajsArabu, wa-al tusrifu, Nursi glosses through stories, incidents from his life and Ibn Sina’s medical justification for avoiding excess in eating.[20]

Another element in Nursi’s writing sets him apart from religious intellectuals such as Muhammad ‘Abduh (1849–1905) and Jamaluddin al-Afghani (1838/9-1897). As much as these two predecessors appealed to the learned classes throughout the Muslim world and sought to popularize their message, their primary audience remained the educated, urban cadres. Nursi, in contrast, never lost his rural roots and often employed the metaphors and imagery of Turkey’s rural population. Other religious modernists, in contrast, distanced themselves from popular belief and rhetorical styles. Nursi, while familiar with the structure and content of modern scientific knowledge, recognized the value of fable and metaphor in shaping his message, and his use of fable and metaphor also facilitated understandings of his message in different social and historical contexts. Thus, in the early part of Nursi’s career, his writings and messages were listened to by audiences rather than read, either directly by Said Nursi to his disciples or by “persons who had already acquired religious prestige.” Moreover, in spite of the “official terror and persecution” carried out against those caught reading and teaching books in the old (Arabic) alphabet in the 1920s and 1930s, the practices continued.[21] The /?jsafe-j Irwas disseminated by “thousands” of women and men, young and old, making copies by hand, and by 1946 or 1947, through the use of a duplicating machine.[22] After 1956, when Nursi’s books were taken off the banned list and published in modern Turkish, readers were added to his audience — those whose primary contact with the J?isa/e-j Nurwas not necessarily the face-to-face or hand-to-hand contact of an earlier era.[23]

The Risale-j Nur is also modern in the sense that its texts encourage reflection on ideas of society and nation. In countries other than Turkey, religious intellectuals also spoke of constitutionalism, justice, and the relation of Islamic belief to modern science, morality, public responsibilities, and the application of faith to public life and spiritual development. Moreover, the “new,” post-1923 Said made a distinctive contribution to the sense of public space. The Syrian translator of Nursi’s writings, Said

Ramadan al-Buti, uses an exegetical means of reaching this conclusion, but he also reflects on the disjunction in Said’s career between his early political activism and his post-1923 writings and activities, which encourage reflection and action on core ethical and religious values without prescribing particular, context-specific political action.[24] More so than many of his contemporaries, moreover, Nursi’s message was accessible not only to religiously oriented educated cadres but also to the less educated, who saw in Said’s message a means of integrating faith with modernity, nationalism, and social revitalization.

The other defining feature of his message, especially in the earlier part of this century, was its success in articulating the conditions of Turkish society, especially rural Turkish society, when the hold of local leaders was rapidly giving way to an increasingly effective state apparatus, improved communications, and centralization. The message was sufficiently adaptable in structure and content, however, so that it subsequently articulated with the Turkey of later eras and, increasingly, to an international audience. Produced at first in manuscript form and faithfully copied by disciples despite long-standing official prohibition, Nursi’s work is now communicated in multiple languages and publications and through a multilingual website (WWW, nesil, com. tr/1. Nursi’s style is readily accessible to these multiple audiences, and women are taking an increasingly active role in promoting the message. For some readers, the specifics of Turkish historical development help explain the nuances of certain passages and the context for which they were originally intended. For others, however, the rich metaphors and imagery offer a point of departure for religious understanding that requires only minimal familiarity with the specifics of the times and places in Turkey where the various elements of the Asa/eJ dVarfirst came into existence.

*** Education and Authority

The Hisale-j Numvae into being at a time when Turkey was undergoing a transformation in politics, education and socioeconomic development. An earlier element of this transformation was the increasingly rapid displacement of traditional education with the reforms of the Tanzimat and the growth of a state educational system beginning in the latter part of

the nineteenth century. A later transformation, beginning in the midtwentieth century and accelerating in later decades, involved a shift to mass education and forms of mass communication.[25] The rise in educational levels and the multiple channels of communication have created an unprecedented opportunity for people to talk back to authorities, both religious and political, and to invest conventional forms with new meanings and contexts. The field of discourse has shifted, so that even those who advocate a more exclusively Islamic intellectual development do so in a language and style which assumes a background knowledge of ideas and institutions which are not exclusively Muslim. Nursi was one of the pioneers in this path, boldly drawing on many forms of knowledge, including knowledge of the natural sciences, and encouraging his followers to do likewise. The current situation is far different from earlier eras, when men of religious learning all read essentially the same “core” texts. Even those contemporary religious thinkers who advocate significantly more traditional forms of religious interpretation than Said Nursi today choose to demonstrate how they can tackle contemporary secular issues, much in the manner of Said Nursi beginning in the early part of this century.

*** Conclusion: An Emerging Public Sphere

Works such as the JtisaJe-j Nurandi religious commentators as diverse as Syria’s Muhammad Shahrur, Iran’s Abdukarim Soroush, and even the traditionalist mufti of Oman, Ahmad bin Muhammad al-Khalil, contribute to redrawing the boundaries of public and religious life in the Muslim-majority world. They challenge conventional religious authority and encourage believers to interpret for themselves the meaning of “foundation” texts. With the advent of mass higher education has come an objectification of Islamic tradition in the eyes of many believers, so that questions such as “What is Islam?” “How does it apply to the conduct of my life?” and “What are the principles of faith?” are foregrounded in the consciousness of many believers and explicitly discussed among them, with a significantly wider range of participants than was the case in the past. Of crucial importance in this process has been a “democratization” of the politics of religious authority and the development of a standardized language inculcated by mass higher education, the mass media, travel and labor migration.

A new sense of public is emerging throughout Muslim-majority states and Muslim communities elsewhere. This distinctly public sphere exists at the intersections of religious, political, and social life and contributes to the creation of civil society. Muslims today, like Christians, Hindus, Jews, Sikhs, and others, have access to multiple forms of communication. These range from the press and broadcast media to fax machines, audio and videocassettes, and from the telephone to the Internet. This multiplicity of communicative forms offers more rapid and flexible ways of building and sustaining contact with constituencies—and for sharing views—than was available in earlier decades. This combination of new media and new contributors to religious and political debate fosters awareness on the part of all actors of the diverse ways in which Islam and Islamic values can be created. It feeds into new senses of a public space that is discursive, performative, and participative.

Just as there is general scholarly recognition that there are multiple paths to modernity,[26] there is a practical awareness of multiple claimants to the task of staging virtue,[27] including a public engagement in the name of religion. In this respect, Muslim activists come close to what Michael Warner has called the republican virtues of colonial America.[28] Print and other media direct consciousness to certain models of civility, membership within a community, and citizenship within a nation, all resting on more or less mutual understandings of commitments and expectations.[29]

Publicly shared ideas of community, identity, and leadership take new shapes in such engagements, even as many communities and authorities claim an unchanged continuity with the past. Mass education, so important in the development of nationalism in an earlier era,[30] and a proliferation of media and means of communication have multiplied the possibilities for creating communities and networks among them, dissolving prior barriers of space and distance and opening new ground for interaction and mutual recognition.

The notion of Islam as dialogue, civil debate, and discussion is gradually gaining ground, although not without setbacks, as the uneven rise of the Nur movement exemplifies. The transformation of form of Qur’anic commentary and religious authority represented by such writings as the Jfjsa/e-1

Nur can be seen as path-breaking only in retrospect, as we can trace the problem of articulation of the Said Nursi’s Qur’anic commentaries and other writings since the beginning of this century.

The profoundly modern Rj’sale-1 NurXias already weathered major economic, political, and educational transformations, mastering the challenge of articulation. However, the structure of the other innovative texts, even when their audiences do not match in scope those for the fijsale-i Nur, indicate the depth and significance of the shift in textual and personal authority which form the core of the modern tradition. Texts such as the /?fsale-j Nurâ successive commentaries also indicate the significant role that religious intellectuals and religious movements can play in enhancing a diverse and vigorous public sphere and—something which does not necessarily follow from an emerging public sphere—a vigorous civil society.

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[1] Robert Wuthnow, Communities of Discourse: Ideology and Social Structure in the the Reformation, the Enlightenment, and European Socialism (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1989), 3.

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Abstract

The article discusses the historical and contemporary emergence of a sense of an Islamic public in a variety of Muslim majority societies and elsewhere. These manifestations of "public Islam" facilitate discussions concerning how to define the common good, equitable solutions to collective problems, shifting boundaries of inclusion and exclusion, and practices that encourage the emergence of a "public" Islam. Compared to notions of public sphere developed within Western social theory, the article shows that the public sphere is no prerogative of Western modern societies nor of democratic political systems. The study demonstrates that also semi-formal and informal articulations of Muslim identities can facilitate the emergence of public, and therefore accountable, forms of Islam.

Keywords

public sphere, civil society, accountability, Islam

Now more than ever, secular and religious Muslims have to confront issues concerning "public Islam and the common good" in open and public debate. Colombia may still lead the world in the number of deaths directly attributable to terrorism, but the events of September 11, 2001, the October 2002 bombings in Bali, the May 2003 "kamikaze" attacks in Saudi Arabia and Morocco, and the staccato repetition of bombings and violence elsewhere, including Jerusalem, Baghdad, Gaza, Madrid, London, and Ayodhya, test the limits of civility and trust. Ironically, "kamikaze" has become one of the first Japanese words to enter educated Arabic usage. It is the word of choice in Moroccan newspapers and transnational Arabic-language newspapers such as al-Sharq al-Awsat (London), offering an alternative to calling the perpetrators of such attacks either "martyrs" or "suicide bombers."

It is important to look beyond immediate- and often disturbing - events and to discern the long-term trends and developments likely to shape world politics for years to come. Only be a tiny minority of Muslims use or condone terrorism in the name of religion, although many have seen it as a weapon of the weak. Apologists find a ready stock of counterpart examples among Hindus, Buddhists, Jews, Christians, and followers of other religions. The actions of these few, however, have captured the imagination of a global political community and altered the sense of political threat. In this context, it is unsurprising that political trends in the Muslim majority world are often violent and contradictory, due in part to the authoritarian regimes of many states. "Public Islam"-a concept intimately related to the new media and to contemporary senses of belonging is not itself immune from such contradictions, but for the most part it works against violence.

Advancing levels of education, greater ease of travel, and the rise of new communications media throughout the Muslim-majority world contribute to the emergence of a public sphere in which large numbers of people, and not just an educated, political, and economic elite, want a say in political and religious issues. The result has been challenges to authoritarianism, the

fragmentation of religious and political authority, and increasingly open discussions of issues related to the "common good" (al-maslaha al-'amma). At the same time, this trend has been uneven and often contradictory.

"Public Islam" refers to the highly diverse invocations of Islam as ideas and practices that religious scholars, self-ascribed religious authorities, secular intellectuals, Sufi orders, mothers, students, workers, engineers, and many others make to civic debate and public life. In this public capacity, "Islam" makes a difference in configuring the politics and social life of large parts of the globe, and not just for self-ascribed religious authorities. It makes this difference not only as a template for ideas and practices but also as a way of envisioning alternative political realities and, increasingly, in acting on both global and local stages, thus reconfiguring established boundaries of civil and social life. Not all these trends are unique to the modern world. One can read Michael Cook's (2000) majestic account of "commanding right and forbidding wrong" in Islamic thought, a study that flows from the early Islamic centuries to the present, as an account of an engagement including both Muslim jurists and a wider Muslim public with issues of community concern and conduct. Such concerns have been profoundly shaped by the course of history and the idea of the past in the Muslim majority world.

Many of the emerging new voices and the leaders of movements within the proliferating public space of the contemporary Muslim world-a social location which is simultaneously physical and communicative-claim to interpret or be inspired by basic religious texts and ideas, and work in local or transnational contexts. These new interpreters of how religion shapes, or should shape, societies and politics, like their counterparts in Poland's Solidarity movement and the liberation theology movements in Latin America in the 1980s, often lack the theological and philosophical sophistication of the religious scholars of earlier eras who previously led such discussions. Such new leaders and spokespeople have nonetheless succeeded in capturing the imagination of large numbers of people. These trends often intensify the ties that bind Muslim communities in the Muslim-majority world with Muslims in Europe, North America, and elsewhere in the world.

The issues and themes in Muslim politics increasingly transcend the specifics of region or place. Thus the contemporary "publicization" of Islam is often more commonly rooted in practice than in formal ideology (Adelkhah 2002).

It has often created new social spaces, a trend significantly accelerated since the mid-twentieth century, and it has facilitated modern and distinctively open senses of political and religious identity.

Such practices and the resulting social spaces involve both emotional and intellectual engagement among participants in overlapping circles of communication, solidarity, and the building of bonds of identity and trust. Some of these practices are based on local communities. Others are geographically widespread and targeted to receptive audiences. One example is the use of e-mail among the Indonesian university students who coordinated the nationwide campus protests that contributed to the downfall of President Suharto in 1998. These modern practices and new communication technologies create new, effective, and geographically more dispersed bases for effective mobilization but they can also threaten tolerance and civil society by facilitating publicity and calls to action by extremist groups (Hefner 2003).

Social practices that are based on ideas of the common good and that contribute to shaping public Islam include collective rituals, such as popular festivals and religious and secular commemorations. They also encompass disciplining and performative practices as diverse as Sufi rituals, regional pilgrimages, the informal economy, the routines of modern schooling, and the use of the press and modern communications technologies.

Prevailing theories of modernity and modernization in the mid-twentieth century assumed that religious movements, identities, and practice had become increasingly marginal, and that only those religious intellectuals and leaders who attached themselves to the nation-state would continue to play a significant role in public life. These assertions concerning the eclipse of religion in the public life of North America and Europe may have been exaggerated. José Casanova (1994) was one of the first to note that by the late 1970s this prevalent view was challenged by the impact of several

parallel developments: the Iranian revolution, the rise of the Solidarity movement in Poland, the role of liberation theology in political movements throughout Latin America, and the return of Protestant fundamentalism as a force in American politics. In the Muslim majority world, however, the role of religion in social and community life never receded. This does not mean that it did not change and develop in ways often underemphasized by Western observers and by Muslims themselves (Zaman 2002). Only in the last decade has the idea of an "Islamic public sphere"-Islamische Öffentlichkeit in German-come to the fore in contexts that Reinhard Schulze (2000 [1994]), responding to the work of Jürgen Habermas, discerned as forming the infrastructure of communication and discourse of a new intellectual class, from the classic era of Islamic reform in the late nineteenth century through the structural transformations of the 1960s and 1970s, and the present.

Ideas of the common good are not an immutable heritage of religious or normative traditions, even if some Muslim spokespersons claim otherwise. They are defined by ethical notions and social values contested and redefined through interaction, practice, and transmission over generations. Sectarianism in Christian Europe provided the habitus and the congregational form for developing such ideas and practices, and it is possible to see in the Sufi tradition and other Muslim religious practices a similar contribution to learning to participate in the public sphere, but also the limits of such participation and to the idea of the public sphere itself. Like the Christian sects, the more orthodox forms of Sufism and other styles of public piety have also contributed to shape reasoning selves and to reconfigure the relationship between legitimate authority and independent pursuit of truth. Immanuel Kant was not born in Iraq; public reasoning has, however, a long tradition in Islamic jurisprudence, both Sunni and Shi'a, that flourished in Iraq and inspired modern Islamic reform.

Various sectarian movements in Europe played a major role in developing the idea of the modular self, empowered with a moral conscience and confronting the authority both of established religion and the state (Casanova 1994). In this European trajectory, only when the freedom of individual conscience is recognized and tolerated can a public sphere develop. It is, nonetheless, a more general argument that religious ideas and

practice can foster the emergence of the public sphere, and this has taken place in the Muslim-majority world.

Ideas of the public are historically embedded and have strong links with culturally shared senses of self and community. They are situated at the strategic intersection between practice and discourse. Public Islam is a concept by which we encompass non-elite practices and interactions and their pre-modern antecedents. Its development includes challenge over the authority to interpret sacred texts and changes how issues are framed. The shared sense of public built into these social interactions varies considerably from place to place and time to time, as issues of individual responsibility, welfare, justice, and piety are contested and in flux.

How do these developments match views of the public sphere premised on the existence of a religiously neutral, indeed "secular" threshold of access to public debate? Some ideas of "secular" divest participants in public exchanges of their religious and cultural identities, or at least marginalize these identities. But the creation of a public culture promoting exchange and discussion can involve deliberation over issues of common interest, through the invocation of traditions of religious, moral, and legal discourses. It can also encourage the gradual emergence of ever more abstract patterns of membership and citizenship that rest on obligations and rights which increasingly fit a legal vocabulary and a contractual view of society. Such developments, including the discontinuities between tradition and modernity created by the emergence of a "culture of publicness," have been the focus of interest of political philosophers, social scientists, and historians alike. It suffices here to mention such diverse authors as Giambattista Vico, Adam Smith, Immanuel Kant, Alexis de Tocqueville, Ferdinand Tonnies, and John Dewey. These thinkers have concentrated on developments in Europe and North America, developments that are specifically Western in our view but that they regarded as exemplary of universal trends.

In spite of the growing recognition that religion has an important role to play in public life and can contribute to the common good, it remains necessary to challenge the common assumption that secularism and secularly oriented practical rationality is the exclusive normative base for "modern" public life (Eickelman 2000, Salvatore 1997; 2000). Religious thought and practice in

the Muslim world can be shown to inspire rational-practical orientations as much as do secular approaches to social action. Some practices, including Sufi (mystical) disciplines, interact and sometimes clash with different forms of secularism as incorporated in the ideologies and practices of most states within Muslim-majority societies or where Muslim minorities live.

For both the nineteenth century and the contemporary era, it is possible to identify the norms of exchange and discourse that are the product of these interactions and clashes, and also the creation of a variety of explicit and implicit Muslim forms of civility and publicness. This in turn requires an effort to discern the social history, or genealogy, of the emergence of a sense and structure of public communication and participation in societies shaped by Muslim cultural, religious, and political traditions.

The present period differs from earlier ones in the speed, intensity, and large numbers of people involved in pushing the contours of tradition, but the publics of an earlier era were equally engaged in doing so. The reshaping of religious identity and forms of communication and publicness in the nineteenth-century Ottoman Empire is especially important in this respect. Consider, for example, Istanbul, a city inhabited by a religiously, ethnically, and linguistically diverse population in which Muslims were outnumbered for a good part of the Ottoman era. The most commonly held assumption is that the confessional communities of the empire lived separately, with minimal reciprocal interaction, and developed social bonds and allegiances exclusively within their own communities. This assumption diverts an appreciation of the mobile and relational aspect of community relations in Ottoman Istanbul, and it says little about the people's sense of identity and of collective allegiance. Understanding the ongoing transformations of the Ottoman Empire from the nineteenth century to the present can facilitate a better grasp of the possibilities for change in the contemporary Muslim majority world (see, for example, Meeker 2002, and Cinar 2005).

The collective historical experience of coexistence among Muslims and non-Muslims in the Ottoman Empire can be analyzed on the basis of their common interests as members of a vibrant society. In India, the relation between Hindus and Muslims is crucial to the development of ideas of secularism and religiosity in relation to the public sphere. In such an

historical and interreligious perspective, the forms of public Islam in the twentieth century appear as contingent crystallizations of much more complex historical processes. For example, imperial encounters have been of great importance to the historical development of public debate in the metropole as well as the colony-a circumstance that the U.S. occupation of Iraq in 2003 brought once again to light.

Notwithstanding this diversity of experience, most Muslims share inherited conceptions of ideas of the common good. These shared ideas of the past shape contemporary understandings of publicness in Muslim societies (see Eickelman and Salvatore 2002). For example, although Islamic religious scholars, the ulama, claim that God reveals the ideas of the common good to humankind, they also regard these ideas as discernable primarily by themselves-men with expertise in the science of scriptural hermeneutics. These religious scholars debate vigorously among themselves about what the common good entails. Moreover, they are rarely the only participants in this debate. Their authority remains strong in the modern world, but is increasingly challenged by alternative religious-and political-authorities that often lack formal training in the traditional religious sciences.

The increasing accessibility of the new media, including satellite television, the Internet, and new uses of older media such as video- and audiocassettes and CDs contributes to fragmentation of the traditional structures of religious authority. It also facilitates innovative ideas of religious authority and of representing Islam in public in unexpected ways (Gonzalez-Quijano 2003; Hefner 2003). There are numerous combinations of fragmented and sustained old and new forms of religious authority and influence in the public sphere, making debates about what constitutes "good" or authentic Islam much more competitive than has been the case in the past.

One of the paradoxes of modern Muslim publics is that despite this discursive expansion in many Muslim-majority states and communities, the public good is increasingly defined within the parameters of Islam. Some states, such as republican Turkey, vigorously sought to domesticate and neutralize Islamic institutions and ideas, yet current Turkish politics are defined by a mutual accommodation and tacit bargaining, as the guardians of secularism and those who participate in Turkey's public sphere and civic life learn to

accommodate one another through public debate and practice (White 2002). As Adelkhah (2004) suggests for Iran, the most powerful part of the women's movement is not for-mal and recognized organizations, all monitored and repressed by the state, but women's activities in the informal economy and in shaping religious practices. As in the French revolution, Adelkhah argues that such "informal" activities can be at least as powerful a vehicle for changing gender roles and ideas of Islam as explicit ideological statements and formal organizations. In all cases, Islamic ideas of the common good shift in content and elaboration over time and, despite explicit denials, may often converge with Western understandings of such major issues as democracy and tolerance for religious diversity (Hefner 2000; Sulaiman 1998). Thus the role of Islam in shaping understandings of the common good is unlikely to recede in importance in the years to come.

Muslims participate in crafting the idea of the common good in a variety of ways, and they also contribute to shaping the definitions of wider and more inclusive public goods in societies where Muslims are not a majority, as in Europe (Khosrokhavar 1997; Kepel 1997 [1994]); or, as in Syria and Turkey, they are confronted with a profoundly secular elite; or, as in Iran, with an increasingly unpopular, although powerful, clerical elite (Adelkhah 2004). In India, Muslims live in a secular state strongly buffeted by religious extremism (van der Veer 1994).

Such historically known and contemporary debates argue against efforts to find a single, overarching idea of the common good shared by all Muslim societies, even if some ideologues-both those claiming to represent Islam and those attacking it-make such essentializing claims. It is often the case that such debates or conflicts about what "good" or "true" Islam entails disrupt implicit or even camouflaged conceptions of the public sphere, as in many communities throughout the Muslim world. The analyses of these debates and the contexts in which they occur throw into relief competing claims to speak in public, revealing threads of consensus and points of divergence or rupture.

The participation of religious authorities in public religious debate cannot be understood without an analysis of the audiences to which their discourses are directed and the elements that connect the followers of religious leaders

to their persona. The new media, including sermons on tape, popular journals, and local radio broadcasts, may combine with more conventional media (including gossip or published fatwas, or religious interpretations) to widen spheres of participation and make them more complex. The degree to which the participation or influence of these new audiences alters conceptions and implementation of the common good, however, is a question that must always be asked rather than assumed (Eickelman and Salvatore 2002: 105-10). New authorities or speakers emerge in the space between the state and more traditional religious authorities, and thus come to represent alternative points of power.

Religious authority can be an essential part of the construction of public religious discourse in many different ways. For example, the participation of Sufis in public religious debate combines modern forms of conceptualizing and presenting religious arguments with membership in a hierarchical and intensely personalized religious framework. The public articulation of the common good does not require the equality of all participants in order to raise a claim to truth and justice.

The relationship between religious authority-whether claimed by traditional religious scholars or by "new" religious intellectuals (Roy 1994 [1992])-and the public sphere is therefore profoundly ambiguous and much more complex than conventional Habermasian theories, in spite of their theoretical sophistication, would make us believe. Even in places where there is a state-sponsored Islamic ideology, as in Pakistan and Iran, individuals, groups, and communities often appropriate this ideology to reinforce their position in public religious debate by claiming Islamic credentials for defining the common good, or furthering particular interests in the guise of shared ones-a device common to public spheres everywhere.

Well before September 2001, the growing number of Muslims in Europe and North America had begun to address questions about national identity, citizenship and multiple loyalties, as in France and Germany. Events since then have further foregrounded the vulnerability of Muslims living in the diaspora. At times this has lead to efforts to organize for more effective participation in the political life of the societies in question, and at times has lead to waves of self-estrangement, exposing the fragility of multicultural

discourse. Even in such a predicament, however, a positive outcome of double estrangement with the home and the receiving societies is to encourage engagement with transnational Muslim causes, especially where Muslims are the victims of human rights abuses. Therefore, the fragilities of the diasporic predicament, exacerbated since the events of September 2001 might in the long run reinforce participation in transnational Muslim publics.

In short, there is no singular public Islam, but rather a multiplicity of overlapping forms of practice and discourse that represent the varied historical and political trajectories of Muslim communities and their links and influences with societies elsewhere. The debates in the public sphere about the common good encompass both words and actions. They are also profoundly shaped by new practices, new forms of publication and communication, and new ways of thinking about religious and political authority.

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Abstract: Morocco has been the site of major transformations in the practice and understanding of social anthropology from the mid-1960s to the present. The author, who first arrived in Morocco in November 1968 by way of Baghdad, has remained involved with Morocco and Moroccan academic life from that arrival to the present. The understanding of Morocco, by Moroccans and others, has in some respects followed trends elsewhere, but also shows significant differences. An earlier generation of British social anthropology – and French social thought – focused on so-called “elementary” societies. This trend seemingly encouraged the marginalization of Morocco as a primary locus for anthropological thought. In practice, Morocco propelled anthropologists to think beyond received earlier wisdom and to practice an anthropology open to complementary disciplines. In addition, the feisty nature of Moroccan public life encouraged anthropologists – both Moroccan and others – to communicate regularly with wide audiences in Morocco itself, as well as elsewhere. This essay traces the trajectory of the discipline in Morocco over the last half century.

Keywords: Anthropology, Islam, Baghdad, Boujad, Education, Morocco, Social Sciences.

The subtitle indicates the scope of this essay. Many articles exist that sum up the changing field of anthropology and related disciplines as they have been practiced in Morocco, and I am responsible for some of them.[1]

This essay takes a more personal approach. It explains how my interests developed in anthropology in general, and Morocco in particular. I suggest the interplay between one's intentions in undertaking anthropology and the often-unanticipated turns of possibility and circumstance that shape how one acts. In recent decades, I've also been particularly interested in encouraging younger Moroccans and others to consider anthropology and sociology as academic fields, or as a bridge to thinking about societies in general, including one's own. There are only limited university posts in academic anthropology and sociology in Morocco, and for that matter in my own country, but the field can have a wider influence beyond its specifically academic applications.

In the eyes of some, my encounters with Morocco may also have historical value because they now span over half a century. Zamane, the Moroccan monthly that seeks to popularize history, recently interviewed me.[2] The interviewer, Ghassan el Kechouri, introduced me by saying that I was one of the few "Anglo-Saxon" anthropologists working in Morocco in the 1960s who had not yet "traveled on" (rawāḥu), a subtle way of saying – together with the safarû used by friends from Boujad – that I am still among the living.

*** Anthropology Meets Islam

Two experiences contributed to my growing interest in the Middle East and in anthropology as an undergraduate. Neither experience came from the

classroom. First was an opportunity to participate in Operation Crossroads Africa in summer 1961, for which I had to raise my own funds. I ended up helping build a school in Maymisham, a remote village in Ethiopia's northern Tigre province. There were about a dozen Americans, equally divided between women and men from historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs) in the American south, with the rest of us from northern schools. We were joined by an equal number of students, all male, from Haile Selassie University in Addis Ababa, at the time the only university in Ethiopia. Our Ethiopian counterparts were drawn from various places in Ethiopia, and about a quarter were Muslim.

The U.S. Peace Corps had just come into existence, but had not yet sent anyone overseas. Thus, our program was all the more unique. Living together in close quarters for two months gave us an opportunity to know, and on occasion to misunderstand, one another. With a borrowed typewriter I kept a collective diary of our experiences and reflections, my first practical experience in learning how to think about societies far removed from my own and to make sense of them through writing. The "journal" was distributed via mimeograph, courtesy of the US. Consulate in Asmara.

A second decisive experience was in Fall 1962. Dartmouth had very few African or African American students at the time. I indicated to a dean of students that I would like to share a dormitory room with an incoming African student. Thus, I was paired with Aḥmad Osman, a Sudanese student who transferred from the University of Khartoum as a sophomore, and who remains to this day a good friend. Aḥmad was a strictly observant Muslim. I knew nothing about Islam at the time, so he gave me an English copy of Muḥammad Ḥamidullah's Introduction to Islam.[3] Weeks later, Aḥmad – a Salafi in the original sense of the term, as I later learned – added that if I did not now become Muslim, I would go to hell. I became fascinated by how someone could hold such strong beliefs, and soon sought out courses on the Middle East and Islam. Aḥmad got interested in the Black Muslim movement and played an instrumental role in persuading Malcolm X (el-Ḥajj Malik elShabazz) to break away from the Elijah Muḥammad's Nation of Islam and move closer to the teachings of Sunni Islam. Ahmad gave the funeral address after Malcolm X's assassination in New York on 21 February 1965.

There were only a few opportunities in the 1960s to learn more about Islam or Middle Eastern anthropology at Dartmouth. I was accepted to graduate school in anthropology at a major East Coast institution, but was appalled by the authoritarian nature of the department chair. When I suggested that perhaps I could combine studies in anthropology with learning about Islam and Arabic, he replied “Here at <verbatim>*****</verbatim> we’ll tell you what to do.” That same day I took a bus to Montréal and talked my way into a modest fellowship at McGill’s Institute for Islamic Studies. Its founder, Wilfred Cantwell Smith (1916–2000) had left McGill for Harvard just a few months before my arrival in August 1964, but his strong influence continued to shape Islamic studies at McGill.

Two years in Montréal gave me training in Islamic history and Arabic, and left me the freedom to combine what I was learning with the social sciences. About half the Institute’s students were Muslim, mostly from Pakistan and India. The rest were mostly North American, including one Mexican, several Canadians, and a few Europeans. At McGill, I read all of Ibn Khaldun’s Muqaddima with a tutor from al-Azhar, as well ethnographies in Arabic. The first year I was at McGill, the Institute was still housed in a former mansion isolated from the main campus. The isolation meant that we students had ample opportunity to learn from one another, including outside the classroom. Soon after I finished the M.A., I revised it for publication as “Musaylima: An Approach to the Social Anthropology of Seventh Century Arabia.”[4] This brought closure to my decision to combine Islamic studies and the study of Arabic with anthropology instead of Islamic history.

*** Chicago in the 1960s

When I entered the University of Chicago’s Department of Anthropology in Fall 1966, Bernard Cohn and Clifford Geertz taught the obligatory introductory graduate courses. Their complementary courses were ideal. Cohn’s course offered the double vision of a professional historian, which he was, and an anthropologist. With Cohn, the excerpted readings from different texts became more than an assemblage of “found” objects in the style of Marcel Duchamp or a collation of predecessor texts carefully chosen carefully chosen to persuade students of the inevitability of the lecturer’s views – a

form of pedagogical authority familiar to generations of graduate students. [5]

Sartre aphoristically calls history “the deliberate resumption of the past by the present.”[6] This phrase perfectly conveys the consciousness of the historical imagination integral to Cohn’s sense of “doing” history. At a measured pace Cohn did more than convey a sense of anthropology’s past. From Cohn, I learned that anthropologists, just like historians, describe societies at certain times and in particular institutional settings. Some historians are more conscious than others of their intermediary role in interpreting the past for a different generation. Cohn invited us to pay equal attention to what anthropologists saw, experienced, and heard, and to which audiences they wrote and talked. His views helped shape how I saw the writings of my anthropological and historical predecessors in understanding Morocco.

Clifford Geertz’s winter 1967 lectures differed significantly from Cohn’s. Geertz spoke so quickly that I worked with three other students to take notes in relays. The size of our group was limited by the number of copies we could make using ball-point pens and carbon paper. Geertz’s rapid-fire lectures traced the notion of culture from nineteenth-century figures such as Johann Herder, Wilhelm Dilthey, and Matthew Arnold to the 1960s. The names and texts flew hard and fast, but we sensed that we caught Geertz in the act of trying to break out of the “iron cage” of received social thought. With his many verbal asides and often mumbled additions to prepared lecture notes, Geertz made us acutely aware of the rough edges of anthropology as received tradition and practice. As our readings caught up with excitement for the discipline, and as Geertz himself acknowledged, his sense of the emergence of a “theory” of culture was heavily filtered through the sieve of Harvard’s Department of Social Relations, the site of his own anthropological initiation beginning in 1950.[7]

In addition to formal lectures, students learned from informal seminars and from one another. For those of us interested in Islam and the Middle East, Clifford and Hildred Geertz conducted a weekly informal seminar at their home, in which student and faulty participants took turns presenting a paper or talk. The peer learning was even more informal, and the various styles of

learning encouraged all of us to become bricoleurs in Lévi-Strauss’ sense of the term. One of my Chicago classmates was the Egyptian anthropologist Abdul Hamid el-Zein (1934–1979),[8] initially trained in Alexandria by the noted Egyptian anthropologist Aḥmed Abu Zaid. We argued about everything, and the result was to link our more general understandings of social anthropology with writings specific to Islam and the Middle East. El Zein entered doctoral studies as a structural-functionalist, to use a now-ancient term, and left an advocate of structuralism as understood by Lévi-Strauss.

From where does “new” thinking come in anthropology? The Hungarian composer György Ligeti (Lecture, Wissenschaftskolleg zu Berlin, 13 February 2001) said of composing music that originality grows at the margins of the incessant repetition of the familiar. The same might be said of anthropology. Geertz’s early arguments, for instance in “Ritual and Social Change,”[9] which I first read when assigned by Bernard Cohn, reassuringly used elements of the social theory we were then learning, but also showed how to move beyond the conventional ideas of the day. In this early article, Geertz linked the dynamics of social change, however tentatively, to the idea of culture. He showed how the modification of an existing anthropological approach could improve the questions asked and the answers given, moving beyond existing social science, but not so far as to become unrecognizable.

*** From Baghdad to Boujad

I originally prepared to do field research in southern Iraq, and by the

Spring of 1968 the Ministry of Education of the pre-Ba’th government granted me permission to conduct field research in Najaf, the center of Shi’a shrines and religious learning in southern Iraq. The formal letter said that I was on “detached” service to an archaeological project. However, in June 1968 the “glorious” Ba’th revolution (al-thawra al-majīda) intervened, followed by the July “corrective action” (al-ḥaraka al-tasḥiḥiyya). After a summer stay in Cairo where the relative of a McGill classmate at the Iraqi Embassy tutored me in Iraqi Arabic – and suggested obliquely (inventing reports on the stomach ulcer of a fictitious

relative) about when it would be safe to continue to Iraq. My wife, Christine, and I reached Baghdad in late September and ’Afaq, a village in southern Iraq, but never Najaf. I only reached Najaf in November 2009, forty-one years later, at the invitation of ’Adil ’Abd al-Mahdi, then one of Iraq’s two vice-presidents.

After several weeks, it was clear that I could not do anthropological work in Iraq – I was informed that I would have to remain at an archaeological site. A 1940s-era British Admiralty Handbook on North Africa that I found in Baghdad briefly described Boujad as a place of shrines and regional pilgrimage, apparently the right size for a graduate student in anthropology. To keep my grant, it was important to pretend that I could do in Morocco roughly the same project as I had intended for Najaf. Boujad is far from the equivalent of Najaf, but for purposes of retaining my grant, I had to make the case.

We left first for Cairo, and on 19 November 1968, we finally arrived in Fès via train from Alger. Algiers was the closest that one could get to Morocco without flying via Europe, which was impossible on a student budget. We spent five days in Sefrou, where Clifford and Hildred Geertz were still present, as well as Paul Rabinow, just about to leave for Sidi Laḥcen Lyusi. We then took ten days to travel via CTM to various places in Morocco, including Boujad.

*** Official Morocco and the Social Sciences in the 1960s

As an academic “refugee” in Morocco, I intended to continue my interest in the role of religion in modern society. In the late 1960s, the social sciences throughout the world were filled with “modernization” theory, which for many meant viewing religious beliefs and practices, having played a role in the past development of societies, increasingly played only a marginal public role. The more I learned about Muslim and eventually other societies, however, the more suspect I became of this assumption.

Fortunately, my graduate studies at the University of Chicago included classes with the human geographer Marvin Mikesell (1929–2017), whose initial field work was in the Rif in the tumultuous post-independence years of 1956–1957. Mikesell's lectures were a good complement to Geertz's informal seminars at his home, which in any case only marginally focused on his and Hildred's work then underway in Sefrou. They also introduced me to the excellent recent work then underway by French and French-trained geographers in Morocco.

Being a non-French foreigner and initially unaware of domestic Moroccan politics may have been an advantage in 1968. Another was sheer good luck. Ma'ṭi Jorio was one of the first Moroccan administrators I met. In 1968 he was Secretary-General of the Direction de l'Urbanisme et de l'Habitat in the Ministry of the Interior. In my basic French, I explained what I wanted to do. He then asked whether I had first sought permission from the Moroccan Embassy in Washington before coming to Morocco. No, I said. I came by way of Baghdad.

Without smiling, he said, Monsieur Eickelman, we have no protocol for American students who come to us by way of Baghdad. Soyez bienvenu. He then explained that he wasn't certain in which province Boujad was because of a recent découpage administrative, so he wrote short notes of introduction to the governors of both Khouribga and Beni-Mellal. The governors, in turn, introduced us formally to their subordinates in the voie hierarchique. Bensaïd Ḥossein, then the governor in Khouribga, wrote a short note of introduction to the Qaid Mumtāz in Oued Zem (see Fig. 1), who informed the Qaid in Boujad by telephone that we would soon make ourselves known. With Bensaïd Ḥossein's note, all the subordinate officials were cordial and left us on our own. We could not have imagined a better administrative welcome. It may have helped that there were no local police; only a small detachment of the Gendarmerie Royale. We introduced ourselves known to them and once again were left alone.

[[d-f-dale-f-eickelman-anthropology-in-morocco-since-1.png][Fig. 1: The short note of introduction written by

Bensaïd Ḥossein, the Governor in Khouribga to the Qaid Mumtāz in Oued Zem]]

Having arrived to Morocco via Baghdad, I knew little about local politics. Much later, in 1986, I met Jorio again when he was Morocco's ambassador to Washington. I asked him about his time in the Ministry of the Interior under Mohamed Oufkir. He explained that there was a cloison parafeu (firewall) between his part of the Ministry, the Direction de l'Urbanisme et de l'Habitat, and the "other" elements of the Ministry. I learned slowly about le Maroc politique, just as I learned incrementally about Islam as locally practiced and understood.

*** Starting Over in Boujad

If my purpose in settling in Boujad wasn't always clearly understood, we were at least tolerated. Initially we stayed in the hotel, soon to close up forever, at the edge of the administrative quarter. We were its only guests. The establishment survived until 1972 as a bar-restaurant for the younger administrators. When we first arrived in Boujad, I asked at the bus stop whether anyone could show us around town. The only person who said yes was (as I learned much later) a recent immigrant from the countryside, Miloudi bin Ḥammou (Draiouiy) from the Beni Bataw, who had become a tailor. My Arabic was that of a schoolteacher. His Arabic was a very local colloquial, spoken at a pace that made Geertz's lectures easy. But we managed. He showed us the available housing, asking everyone for leads as we walked around. He cautioned that one house in "New Boujad," was occupied by jnūn, which we thought would get us off to an inauspicious start even if the jnūn left us alone. Another ample, two-storied house in the madina had an inner courtyard, but part of the second floor had collapsed ("just walk around the hole in the floor," said the landlord). Our indefatigable guide then knocked on the door of the large house of a former minister and in-law to Hassan II, and a servant told us that there was no apartment within to let.

Quickly word got out that we were looking for a place to live and Boujad's Qāḍī, al-Ḥajj 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Manṣūrī, let it be known that he had a newly-

built apartment just across the street from where he lived, and adjoining a garden. Miloudi introduced us, and we took the apartment. Once we settled in, invitations arrived from key Sharqāwa and other notables for lunch. When I indicated that I knew Arabic, some would bring out old papers, including correspondence with prior rulers. With difficulty, I could make out some of the writing. Because such documents often yielded more about extended families, past rivalries, and incidents that my hosts also had difficulty reading, they were then quickly removed from me. It would be much later before I would see them again.

The beginnings of field research are uneven by necessity. My Arabic was basically “schoolteacher” Arabic, correct but initially devoid of Moroccan colloquial usage. As my local Arabic improved, I sometimes was asked in Boujad’s rural hinterland to translate from Morocco’s mid-day newscasts, then spoken in formal Arabic, into colloquial Moroccan Arabic. By the mid1980s, when rural youth had more access to elementary and intermediate schooling, I lost this “job.” In the first months in Boujad, I travelled a lot to the rural markets around Boujad and also examined the agricultural tax registers to get an idea of economic activity and hinterland ties to the town. I also mapped out the various quarters in Boujad, a slow but rewarding task facilitated by the electric company making for me a copy of their map of the town, based on an aerial photograph taken in the last days of the Protectorate.

At first I was puzzled by the lack of agreement among Boujadis about where urban quarters began and ended, a puzzle described in one of my first professional articles on Morocco.[10] The survey also enabled me to meet people from many different backgrounds. I also selected people rural and urban, young and old, wealthy and at the socioeconomic margins – and created elaborate kinship charts. Such charts, the bread and butter of anthropology, enabled me eventually to go beyond the received wisdom of the meanings of kinship and tribes.

My forays into Boujad’s rural hinterland culminated, so to speak, with a country wedding in late February 1969. All the male guests were together in one building in which the animals for the feast were slaughtered and then cut up at one end of the room, cooked, and passed around. We all slept at

the opposite end of the room. Two weeks later with a high fever, thinking I had only a passing flu, I saw a doctor in Beni-Mellal – a Haitian trained in Brooklyn – who diagnosed me as having cutaneous anthrax – fortunately the sort from which one can recover. My best guess was that I caught this at the wedding, although later I learned that there was a surge in the number of anthrax infections among animals in the region, plus myself.

Recovery from anthrax meant that for the better part of a month I was confined to our apartment. Nonetheless, people who had been working with me on kinship charts visited after the first week and I transcribed stories and other texts that improved my colloquial Arabic.

*** Varieties of Educational Experience

Before the 1980s and 1990s, university students in Boujad were few. Even lycée students had to board in student dormitories elsewhere, and Khouribga and Casablanca were the destinations for many. In the social sciences, a basic Marxism prevailed and a notion of “modernity” prevailed that had little room for thinking about “tradition.” Thus, some university students whom I met assumed that I was engaged in “folklore” studies in a “fossilized” town that was being passed over by events occurring elsewhere. My interest in the annual musem of Sidi Mḥammad al-Sharqi, which still attracted large numbers of Sma‘la tribesmen from the region of Oued Zem, was for them an example of an obsession with “folklore.” However, government efforts politically to pressure the Sma’la as a collectively – much land was still communally owned, indicated that many local religious practices were alive and still relevant to contemporary society even if out of favor among many townspeople and the educated elite.

To complement our field research every six weeks or so, Christine and I took the bus to Rabat. At that time, Rabat was still a compact town. Mohammed V university was within convenient walking distance, as were most government ministries, and many faculty members lived within the same area or a short taxi ride away. These brief visits allowed me to contact researchers and faculty members doing work related to my own. I first visited the Institut de Sociologie in early 1969 on one of these short visits to Rabat. There I met

Abdelkebir Khatibi, its director, before the Institut was ordered closed in 1970. The Makhzen, having noted the role of sociologists in the French uprisings in 1968, may have assumed that Moroccan sociologists were preparing to take a similar disruptive stance. Khatibi, in turn, directed me to Paul Pascon at the Institut Agronomique et Vétérinaire Hassan II. Independent of any formal organization, I found my way to Mohammed Guessous, in his modest Agdal villa that slowly became overshadowed on all sides by highrise residences.

Only after leaving Morocco in early 1970 did I meet senior foreign colleagues working on Morocco, such as David Hart, then living in Granada. Likewise, I met Ernest Gellner in London. He and I rarely shared the same point of view on many issues,[11] but we became friends. We were supposed to have co-taught a course at Dartmouth in 1996, a collaboration caught short by his death in 1995. Gellner first visited Morocco in the turbulent first years after Moroccan independence. His Saints of the Atlas (1969) did not reach me until my last months in Boujad, but many of his articles – on tribal rebellions and other subjects – appeared earlier. Some were translated into French and avidly read in Morocco.[12] Gellner was instrumental in seeing that Abdellah Hammoudi's influential critique of his argument on segmentation got translated into English (1980).[13]

Clifford Geertz's Islam Observed came out in 1968, although a copy did not reach me in Morocco until mid-1969.[14] Both Gellner and Geertz made conceptual arguments that encouraged students and colleagues, Moroccan, European, and American alike, to think about Morocco in fresh ways. They defined the "new wave," so to speak, of English-language studies on Morocco, acknowledging of course the much earlier and until recently neglected work of Westermarck on Morocco in the early 20th century.

The French contributions to understanding Morocco were not only legacy studies from the colonial era, and the colonial era itself was so heavily influenced by ethnography in the service of domination that Edmund Burke III (2014) called his last book on Morocco The Ethnographic State.[15] Rémy Leveau's many writings on Moroccan politics after independence – at first under pseudonyms and subsequently in his own

name (especially Leveau 1976) remain highly significant in defining the politics of an era, and the many French studies of the human geography of Morocco remain essential readings.[16]

Of “new wave” work, Abdellah Hammoudi’s La victime et ses masques (1988), among subsequent writings, uses French colonial ethnographies, assessing their implicit assumptions and logic while also moving beyond them to assess various more recent approaches and his own ethnography. Likewise, recent work in Arabic by Abdelrhani Moundib takes us full circle, by comparing Geertz’s work to my own in understanding Moroccan society and social history.[17] Moundib’s distinctive contribution is to write primarily in Arabic rather than French or English, making the concepts of anthropology and sociology directly available in Arabic for a new generation of Moroccan students. Youness Loukili is another younger Moroccan focused on using Arabic as a language for social science writing in Morocco.

By the 1970s, the social science disciplines and history in Morocco began to change in many ways. In the late 1970s, at the apartment of the historian Germain Ayache, conveniently located on avenue Allal ben Abdallah in Rabat, I met young historians, including Mohammad Aafif, who later became my student in anthropology at New York University and translator of two of my books and several articles. I also met Ahmad Toufiq at Ayache’s apartment, or should one say salon. Foreseeing the Arabization of university education in the 1970s, Ayache “upgraded” his formal Arabic so that he could lecture in Arabic and play a full formal role in Toufiq’s 1979 dissertation defense, the first in Arabic (as opposed to French) for the history faculty. It was held in the largest auditorium at the Université Mohammed V and made headlines in the national press. Beginning in the mid-1970s, I also met regularly with sociologist Mohamed Cherkaoui nearly each time that we were co-present in Morocco. Although Mohamed only began to publish regularly on Morocco beginning in 2003,[18] he followed events regularly and, like many other members of his extended family, regularly shared his knowledge and interpretations of Moroccan events.

The period from 1976 onward saw increased opportunities for Moroccan and American social scientists to work together. I had a role in establishing an agreement between the Université Mohammed V and New York University,

the University of Pennsylvania, and Princeton University. A key clause was that the financing for any activities was a separate matter. Nonetheless, the agreement created a structure. For example, Abdellah Hammoudi replaced me at New York University in 1979–1980 when I had a research leave.

For me at least, a key time for working closely with Moroccan colleagues was in the Spring of 1992, when I led a faculty seminar in Arabic at the Department of History at Mohammed V University, organized largely by Mohamed Aafif. We took terms delivering papers in Arabic. One “takeaway” from this seminar was the challenge of making presentations and discussions in formal Arabic. This was perhaps most challenging for me, but for others, trained in Paris, Manchester, Princeton, and elsewhere, the need to stick closely to notes was evident and I became sensitive to the challenges of working in multiple language traditions. My own presentation, presented also in Fès and elsewhere in Morocco, concerned the complementarity of social anthropology and history, especially in Moroccan studies.[19]

Alongside the faculty seminar, I hosted an off-campus graduate student seminar, also in Arabic. As this weekly seminar progressed, I got an indepth understanding of the ideas and coping strategies of Moroccan graduate students in the social sciences. One of the participants, Abdelrhani Moundib, later became a faculty member in the Department of Sociology at Mohammed V University.

*** From Fieldwork to Print

My first book, Moroccan Islam (1976), sought to portray Islam as it was popularly understood and practiced. This included some activities, such as the annual donations by tribal groups or individuals to Sharqāwa “visitors” (zuwwār-s), practices that began to diminish in importance by the 1980s, possibly in relation to the growing pervasiveness of education and migration to both the rural and urban areas, but also because of historical events of which I became more aware only after leaving Morocco in early 1970. My Knowledge and Power in Morocco (1985) dealt with “rural” intellectuals and the Salafi movement, which grew

by leaps and bounds in Boujad and elsewhere in Morocco beginning in the 1930s.

An unexpected part of my work after 1969 involved local history, especially making sense of letters and correspondence from the 19th and early 20th centuries held by some Sharqāwa and loaned to me. Without assistance, the notarial style of writing was largely beyond my Arabic. I discovered that the Qāḍī, Ḥajj ‘Abd al-Raḥmān – also my neighbor and landlord – was also fascinated by local history. We took to working together, and he patiently explained to me the details of how the tribal countryside was tied to Boujad and the Sharqāwa, past and present. Working with the Qāḍī, I was increasingly amazed at the range of his interests. There weren’t enough court cases in Boujad to warrant a full-time judge, so Ḥajj ‘Abd al-Raḥmān served also as Qāḍī in Oued Zem, Kasba Tadla, and Beni-Mellal. I often was invited to travel with him, and through these visits I became aware of the judges, notaries, and others who shared at least part of his background. Many had attended the Yousufiyya. In addition, Ḥajj ‘Abd al-Raḥmān’s older brother, Aḥmad (d. 1975), was still alive. A Qāḍī in Bzu for much of the colonial period and the first years after independence, Ahmad was subsequently appointed to the Constitutional Council (1960) and elected to Morocco’s first parliament (1963). His career and discussions with him gave me a good sense of how the transition was made between the last years of the protectorate and the first years of independence.

I adapted the term “rural” intellectuals, from Antonio Gramsci. In his terms, “rural” intellectuals had “organic” ties with the “peasant” proletariat. In my terms, they were men of learning who anchored religious practice in community life. More than many civil servants, I recognized that judges such as Ḥajj ‘Abd al-Raḥmān in Boujad, and Ḥajj Aḥmad bin ‘Abdesslam al-Bu ‘Ayyachi, chief of the criminal court of Tangier when I met him in the early 1970s (and son of the Minister of Justice of ‘Abd al-Krim al-Khatibi’s shortlived Riffian Republic, 1921–1926), had a finely-tuned understanding of life in rural, tribal Morocco. In the late 1960s, seventy percent of Moroccans were still rural.

Only after leaving Morocco in early 1970 was I able to connect the dots among some of the puzzles about Boujad’s role in Morocco from the late

nineteenth century to the present. One element were the landholdings, or ‘azib-s, owned by the Sharqāwa zāwiya s at the time of the death of Sultan Mulay alḤasan I in 1894.[20] The Sharqāwa were instrumental in getting Mulay al-Ḥasan’s body and entourage through hostile tribal territory after his death during his final royal progress throughout his domains.[21] The Sharqāwa ceased to act cohesively in the turbulent politics following the death of Mulay al-Ḥasan I, when some tribes linked to the Sharqāwa supported Mulay ‘Abd al-‘Azīz as Sultan and others supported the rival claimant to the throne, Mulay ‘Abd al-Ḥafīd. By 1905 the French began carefully to monitor – and manipulate – the situation.[22] These decisions shaped the Sharqāwa of Boujad and elsewhere for decades to come, and it remains hard for some Sharqāwa to come to terms with the last 120 years of their history.

Working with Ḥajj ‘Abd al-Raḥmān was the upper end of local history. The other element was changing local religious practices. Boujad is ringed by shrines of the descendants of Sidi Mḥammad al-Sharqī, and in the late 1960s, some of them had attendants who, on request, recited the stories connected with the Sharqāwa. I recorded many of these accounts on cassettes, and over time had them transcribed and transliterated. Bouzekri Draiouiy, son of Miloudi bin Ḥammou (Draiouiy), eventually got a license (B.A.) in linguistics and English from Muhammad V. We published one set of these myths (khaṣalāt al-ṣāliḥīn).[23] The field cassettes were digitally restored in the 1990s. Our original idea was to place the accounts on a website connected with Boujad, but some aspects of past “maraboutic” practices remain sensitive so the project remains “on hold.” Today people in Boujad and many other locales are more likely to foreground the chanting of poetry in praise of the Prophet (al-amdāḥ al-nabawiya), which bring together imams, barbers, carpenters, civil servants, and others who enjoy the competition and camaraderie – and the robust competition between towns and regions.

*** Politics in the Periphery

In 1968–1970, I became more aware of domestic politics in Morocco.

People active in politics spoke only about the past – especially the struggle for independence. It was perhaps too dangerous to speak openly about the present. There were student strikes in 1969, which Boujad's Qaid broke up by going to the secondary school with a whip to "educate" student demonstrators by ordering the bastinado (falaqa) applied publicly to the soles of the feet of the teenage student leaders. Adults engaged in politics sometimes disappeared for days at a time or longer while in police custody. On later return visits beginning in 1976 to Boujad, I attended some political rallies, as I also did in Rabat, and during the 1977 and 1984 election campaigns, I travelled with some candidates to Boujad's rural areas. In 1977, the pre-mobile, pre-internet news of what the government was doing with the elections was communicated through networks of taxi drivers and truckers. In 1977, the local audiences in rural areas would be largely silent in front of candidates. The candidate spoke in what I sometimes call a "teacher's" Arabic, and this may have been part of the problem. By 1984, listeners, especially younger ones, spoke back to the candidate: "If we vote for you, will we ever see you here again?" was one memorable phrase. Education had permeated much of the countryside by 1984, and the countryside could talk back.

The parties wanted votes, but not all parties had the technical skills or resources to get out the vote or use the media. This involved a long-term learning process, but it had begun. Participation in Morocco's communal and parliamentary elections was fascinating to me. In 1969, for example, large black rectangles, 14 as I recall, were painted on the side of walls throughout Boujad, but they were not filled with posters or information. On election day, I saw people who tried to vote in one polling place told to go away because, said a government clerk, "We've taken care of your vote." Several years later, I saw the voter register for the 1969 elections, with page after page of women called "Fatima" with no family name. By 1976, however, the main political parties, mainly the Istiqlal and the USFP in Boujad, could openly campaign and hold local officials more to account.[24] And people could talk back. Women in one quarter, disappointed with one candidate for office, chanted a caustic rhyme against the candidate – "O [...], O mule, where's the [piped] water and sewers that you promised us? You have a day and a half left [before the elections, then you go to [the state mental hospital]." The chant drove the candidate away from his scheduled talk.

In the long term, the political parties – and the government – learned step by step how to take local political action. Gerrymandering, for example, is a complex but effective way to shape election outcomes, as I learned from my youth in Chicago. It was also something that political parties and states learn to either denounce or use to their advantage.

The significance of rural areas and tribes in religion and politics is easy to underestimate. After 2001, some young Moroccans from rural areas, including Boujad, found their way to Afghanistan. Some joined al-Qa'ida or hoped to do so, and others subsequently did the same for ISIS. In Amsterdam in 2000, a Moroccan-born member of the Dutch parliament took me to visit a Saudi-financed cultural center that contained large numbers of Riffians with clothing and beard styles imitating the Taliban, and no facilities to teach the attendees Dutch or for that matter Arabic. No region, urban or rural, in Morocco or elsewhere, is immune from religious – or for that matter nonreligious – extremism.

Vestiges of the "modernization" theory of the mid-twentieth century are sometimes invoked to explain Moroccan politics. "Traditions" are sustained only if they adapt to the present. In the more than half-century that I've known Morocco first-hand, I've seen many changes for the better, and also episodes that reveal the fault lines of wider society and the challenges of governance. Today the government can offer more to its citizens, and on some matters is highly trusted. For example, on 24 August 1994, for example, I was in Tangier when there was a terrorist attack on the hotel Atlas-Asni in Marrakesh, reportedly involving Algerians, that killed two Spanish tourists. The next day, a merchant in the Tangier madina who was amīn of the jewelers among other public roles, missed a prearranged meeting with me. He showed up hours late and apologized, saying that he was at the police station. Thinking that he had been implicated in some way with the attacks, I showed concern. He replied: "It was a national matter, not a political one" – for him a crucial distinction. He had voluntarily provided information on large cash transactions involving Algerians. The distinction between "national" and "political" can have many interpretations, of course. An effective political party will do its best to make its political objectives national ones, and so will the state. To adapt a useful term from Oxford philosopher Walter Gallie, the concepts of "nation" and "politics," and likewise terms like social and

economic justice, and development, are “essentially contested.”[25] One can agree that the concepts are important but not agree on their meaning.

*** Anthropology After COVID-19

Focusing not on anthropological theory but the messy world of experience and practice facilitates thinking about how Morocco and for that matter all of us will respond to the current situation. The full range of how Covid-19 will change our societies is yet unknown. Here is one possibility for Morocco: Covid-19 is significantly disrupting the existing long supply chains on which many international businesses depend. For example, the average wage of most Chinese workers is now higher than that of most Moroccans. The Moroccan workforce, and its technical capacity, is significantly better than it was a decade ago. Nothing will happen overnight, but parts of Morocco’s infrastructure has improved by leaps and bounds. It’s conceivable that Morocco will have an opportunity to emerge as more competitive on a global scale.

Anthropology cannot predict what will work, but it can offer critical insights into how the different parts of a society, both those so taken for granted that we hardly notice them, and the “top-down” social engineering preferred by some states, bankers, and industrialists. Anthropology offers an opportunity to combine bottom-up approaches, engaging in continuing dialogue with actors in and observers of society.

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*** الأنثروبولوجيا في المغرب منذ ستينيات القرن الماضي: ملحمة شخصية

ملخص: كان المغرب ًموقعا لتحولات أساسية في ممارسة الأنثروبولوجيا الاجتماعية وفهمها من منتصف سنوات الستين من القرن الماضي حتى الوقت الحاضر. وقد ظل المؤلف، الذي وصل إلى المغرب لأول مرة في نونبر 1968 عن طريق بغداد، ًمنخرطا في الحياة الأكاديمية المغربية والمغاربية منذ ذلك الحين وحتى الوقت الحاضر. اتبع فهم لكنه يظهر ًأيضا ،المغرب من قبل المغاربة وغيرهم، في بعض النواحي، اتجاهات في أماكن أخر اختلافات كبيرة. وركز جيل سابق من الأنثروبولوجيا الاجتماعية البريطانية — والفكر الاجتماعي الفرنسي — على ما يسمى بالمجتمعات "الأولية." ويبدو أن هذا الاتجاه شجع على تهميش المغرب كمركز أساسي للفكر الأنثروبولوجي. وفي الممارسة العملية، دفع المغرب علماء الأنثروبولوجيا إلى التفكير فيما وراء الحكمة السابقة وممارسة الأنثروبولوجيا المنفتحة على التخصصات التكميلية. وفضلا عن ذلك، شجعت الطبيعة المشاكسة للحياة العامة المغربية علماء الأنثروبولوجيا — المغاربة وغيرهم — على التواصل بانتظام مع جماهير واسعة في المغرب ويتتبع هذا المقال مسار الأنثروبولوجيا وتطورها كتخصص علمي .نفسه، وكذلك في أماكن أخر في المغرب خلال منتصف القرن الماضي.
الكلمات المفتاحية: الأنثروبولوجيا، الإسلام، بغداد، أبي الجعد، التربية، المغرب، العلوم الاجتماعية.

*** L’anthropologie au Maroc depuis les années 1960: Une odyssée personnelle

Résumé: Le Maroc a été le théâtre de transformations majeures dans la pratique et la compréhension de l’anthropologie sociale du milieu des années 1960 à nos jours. L’auteur, arrivé au Maroc pour la première fois en novembre 1968 par Bagdad, est resté impliqué dans la vie académique marocaine et marocaine de cette arrivée à nos jours. La compréhension du Maroc, par les Marocains et d’autres, a suivi à certains égards des tendances ailleurs, mais montre également des différences significatives. Une génération antérieure d’anthropologie sociale britannique – et de pensée sociale française – se concentrait sur les sociétés dites “élémentaires.” Cette tendance a apparemment encouragé la

marginalisation du Maroc en tant que lieu principal de la pensée anthropologique. Dans la pratique, le Maroc a poussé les anthropologues à penser au-delà de la sagesse antérieure et à pratiquer une anthropologie ouverte à des disciplines complémentaires. En outre, le caractère fougueux de la vie publique marocaine a encouragé les anthropologues – marocains et autres – à communiquer régulièrement avec un large public au Maroc même, ainsi qu'ailleurs. Cet essai retrace la trajectoire de la discipline au Maroc au cours du dernier demi-siècle.

Mots-clés: Anthropologie, Islam, Bagdad, Boujad, éducation, Maroc, sciences sociales.

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<quote>

Religious symbols do not resolve conflicts; they communicate them. The conflicts continue to exist as before; the dialectic never stops.

—Abdul Hamid el-Zein, The Sacred Meadows

</quote>

“Zein,” as friends and colleagues knew him, practiced an interpretive anthropology that, like the writing of history, is a craft in which the best work is realized only after long years of field experience, study, and the development of concepts and themes through teaching and writing. Zein’s sudden death on 13 August 1979 at the age of 44 cut short his work just as it began to achieve its fullest form.

Zein’s professional career was divided between two remarkably distinct periods. The first of these lasted for roughly the decade prior to 1966, during which he mastered the conventions of what might be called a standard, functionalist anthropology and applied them to ethnographic research in Egypt. The second period began in 1966 with his participation in the formative period of symbolic anthropology at the University of Chicago.

Zein obtained a B.A. in philosophy and the social sciences in 1957 and an M.A. in anthropology the following year from the University of Alexandria, worked as a research assistant with the Nubian Ethnological Survey (1960–1965), and for eight months (1965–1966) studied the impact of the World Food Program upon the Bedouin of Egypt’s Western desert. In 1966 he took a

second master’s degree in anthropology from the American University in Cairo.

There are two published products of his earlier period: an account in Arabic of the notion of social structure and a discussion of the socioeconomic implications of the water wheel in Egyptian Nubia.[1] The latter article is a brief summary of his 300-page master’s thesis at the American University in Cairo, “Water and Wheel in a Nubian Village” (1966), based upon his years of study of the Nubians of the Aswan Dam region before their resettlement in 1963.[2]

Scholars who have consulted Zein’s thesis agree that it undoubtedly constitutes the most comprehensive account of the technology and social organization of irrigation practices available for the Middle East. He uses an intensive study of the operation and social context of the water wheel as an organizing device for describing land rights and use, the market, family, politics, religion and social status. Zein himself was dissatisfied with the overall functional framework of his thesis but was at the time unaware of viable theoretical alternatives. In essence his principal argument was that the various local social institutions associated with the water wheel were in a closed equilibrium and that social status was determined primarily by local rights in land and water. Zein’s rich ethnography suggests a more complex situation in which there were many determinants of status not directly connected with land and water rights. Cash from market activities and from migrant labor often was invested in education and in nonagricultural economic activities, and could be used to effect major changes in status.

Prior to 1966, Zein’s approach to anthropological fieldwork and his writing differed only in detail, generally in the precision of his ethnographic observation, from the work of Western anthropologists concerned with the same problems. Nor did any aspect of his work in this period challenge established theoretical conventions. Significantly, his work in this period dealt only peripherally with religious belief and the problems of shared social meanings, later to become dominant interests.

The direction of Zein’s work profoundly altered in 1966, when he received a Ford Foundation fellowship to enter the doctoral program in anthropology at the University of Chicago, where at the time the department was in the midst of one of its periodic intellectual crises. From the beginning, Zein flung himself into the student debates over the implications of competing approaches to the study of symbols and meaning. For the first time he was exposed to rival styles of structuralism, formal linguistics, and approaches to the study of religion which went well beyond the functional studies, usually based upon studies of village communities, which until then he associated with the full corpus of anthropological discourse. For a short period Zein resisted these new approaches, but then vigorously sought to master them. The lectures of Clifford Geertz, especially those concerned with the interpretation and analysis of religious symbolism, kindled in Zein a desire to comprehend analytically his intellectual and religious traditions as a Muslim. This merging of personal and professional commitment was further nurtured by the late Lloyd A. Fallers, who quickly recognized Zein’s unusual talent and encouraged him to study the Muslims of East Africa.

Through Fallers, Zein became a participant in the Committee for the Comparative Study of New Nations, which supported his fourteen months of field research on the island of Lamu in Kenya (1968–1969), a major center of traditional Islamic learning on the Swahili coast. A Woodrow Wilson Foundation fellowship supported a year’s writing upon his return to Chicago.

The first result of Zein’s work in Lamu was his searching The Sacred Meadows, essentially a slightly revised version of his dissertation.[3] This difficult but rewarding book provides a thick description of the myths and rituals of Lamu society and how these have been differently reconstructed and reinterpreted by various social groups in the light of their changing notions of their social order and past. The lack in Zein’s massive study of any substantial account of economic activities or of history as understood at least in part on the basis of archival sources (as opposed to how people today regard the significance of past events) is deliberate. He regarded the proper structural study of religious symbolism as the discernment of unchanging “fundamental unconscious meaning,” arrived at by the analysis of shifting “conscious and surface” meanings.[4]

Zein’s notion of structuralism is worth considering in detail, for it is to my knowledge the first major application of such a method to an ethnographic study of Islam. Zein developed his approach pragmatically. When working on The Sacred Meadows in Chicago he used a vast board (a technology inspired by an almost casual and perhaps whimsical remark by Levi-Strauss[5]) on which he plotted out and endlessly rearranged cards on which he had noted the various implicit oppositions in Lamu myths and rituals. He spend months at this board; only when he felt that he had grasped the workings of the entire system of oppositions did he begin to write.

Only several years after Zein completed The Sacred Meadows did he feel prepared to articulate the implicit principles on which his structuralism is based, principles which also informed subsequent projects that he had begun to elaborate at the time of his death. In ”Beyond Ideology and Theology,” Zein referred to his earlier (1974) analysis of the “saint” in Lamu and wrote that he “may be profitably viewed as a symbol, not in the sense of being a vehicle for meaning, but as a relational construct in which the dimension of purity/ impurity, defilement, and sacralization are articulated with a broad and variable range of content, including political, economic, and otherwise pragmatic aspects of life.” In general, “it is only by going beyond institutions and functions, actors, and positive meanings to the relatively simpler complexity of categorical opposition that the richness of the saint or any other ‚religious symbol’ emerges along with its position in the logic of culture.”[6]

Zein’s approach is clearly a radical departure from earlier studies of Islam. In his view, ”Islam,” “economy,” “history,” “religion,” and so on (the quotation marks are his) do not exist as things or entities with meaning inherent in them, “but rather as articulations of structural relations, and are the outcome of these relations.”[7] The structuralist scholar should seek to discern the relations which produce any given set of meanings. ”Beginning from this assumption, the system [of religious symbols] can be entered and explored at depth from any point, for there are no absolute discontinuities anywhere within it—there are no autonomous entities and each point within the system is ultimately accessible from every other point.... The logic of such a system, the logic of culture, is immanent within the content and does not exist without it.”[8]

For Zein, the anthropologist who uncovers structural relationships through an intricate analysis of the content of religious rituals and beliefs shares with the natives “a logic which is beyond their conscious control” and thus objective.[9] Anthropological and theological discourse differ from popular, conscious expressions of belief only in their greater systematization and “in the particular aspects of these local interpretations selected for analysis.”[10] He argued that most anthropological accounts of Islam, like those of theologians, utilize presupposed and fixed assumptions concerning consciousness, history, and meaning, predetermine the limits as to what is properly religious and Islamic, and arbitrarily distinguish folk from elite and real from false Islam. The resulting “utility of the concept ‘Islam’ as a predefined religion with its supreme ‚truth’ is extremely limited in anthropological analysis.”[11]

As the above views suggest, Zein was a man of outstanding intellectual courage and honesty. He recognized that many of his theoretical assumptions were controversial and liable to misinterpretation in some circles, but declined to confine his discussions to a small band of like-minded students and colleagues. In Oman and in Kenya (where in the course of my own research I have met many of the persons who worked with Zein) as in university circles in Egypt and in the United States, Zein made no distinction between informants, friends, and colleagues, and explained his views on how Islam was to be understood in the same terms to traditional men of learning, militants who advocated that the only authentic understanding of religion was their own, those skeptical of his innovative style of analysis, and colleagues and students who simply wanted to benefit from seeking to understand his work. Even when expression of his views resulted in political or personal hardship (he told me that he was once denied entry to Saudi Arabia because of some statements on Islam contained in a manuscript he was carrying), he chose the path of intellectual integrity and sought to engage in meaningful, searching discussions.

Most of Zein’s career after obtaining his Ph.D. in 1971 was spent at Temple University. With colleagues he consistently advocated an unwavering commitment to scholarship and humanistic learning even when political and economic pressures made it convenient not to do so. With students he was

capable of prodigious feats of work, spending long hours in Socratic dialogue, leading students to transcend disciplinary boundaries and to develop their own ideas.

After two years at Temple, Zein took a leave of absence to return to the American University in Cairo. His intention was to consider remaining there permanently and thus contribute to the development of higher education in the Arab world. He resigned before he completed the academic year there because of what he regarded as obstacles to effectively presenting his style of intellectual discourse. He painfully decided that the intellectual life which he loved could best be maintained by his becoming a permanent expatriate, a style of life which perhaps paralleled to some degree the style of analysis he advocated for the study of cultural meanings. Immediately upon his resignation from A.u.c. in 1973, he accepted an invitation to work for seven months with a UNICEF mission concerned with the study of practices related to health, nutrition, and child rearing in the Sultanate of Oman.

After his return to Temple and during his membership in the Institute for Advanced Study, Princeton (1977–1978), Zein pursued the research program outlined in his 1977 article. From listening to his formal lectures and from long hours of conversation with him, I know that had Zein lived to complete the manuscript he was preparing on notions of self and styles of discourse in Oman, it would have been one of the richest ethnographic accounts of its type available to anthropology concerning any Arab society. He also was working on a long and complex analysis of the myths and rituals associated with the pilgrimage to Mecca and a parallel structural analysis of certain folktales prevalent throughout the Arab world. Despite his evidently failing health, he also was beginning to prepare a research proposal for the study of the Comoro islands off the East African coast to complement his earlier study of Lamu.

Zein’s commitment to structural analysis was a passionate one of heart and intellect. He was born into an upper middle class merchant family of Alexandria and like others of his generation attended Quranic school and memorized parts of the Quran. Subsequently he studied Islamic philosophy and mysticism as part of the curriculum at the University of Alexandria, but paradoxically it was only in the 1970s in the United States that he began

systematically to rediscover the complex richness of his Muslim heritage and to read voraciously in the Islamic sciences. Although his views on understanding religious belief made some fellow Muslims uneasy, Zein was profoundly committed to his faith. Another aspiration in his last years was to return to the Middle East and take a degree in Islamic theology and jurisprudence, so that he could more readily engage in dialogue with coreligionists critically interested in comprehending Islam's endless capacity for self-renewal. Similarly, he sought to make anthropology more of a self-renewing form of philosophical and social inquiry which could transcend the intellectual traditions of both East" and "West."

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[4] Ibid., p. 172.

[5] Claude Levi-Strauss, Structural Anthropology (Garden City, 1967), p. 226.

[6] Abdul Hamid el-Zein, “Beyond Ideology and Theology: The Search for the Anthropology of Islam” Annual Review of Anthropology, 6 (1977), 227–254.

[7] Ibid., p. 251

[8] Ibid., pp. 251–252.

[9] Ibid., p. 252.

[10] Ibid., p. 246.

[11] Ibid., pp. 248–249.

#title Print, Writing, and the Politics of Religious Identity in the Middle East

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Abstract

Texts, writing, and print create new forms of communication, community, and authority. Their transformative influence pervades Middle Eastern and Muslim religious and political forms. Scholarly attention to them collapses conventional assumptions of a “great divide” separating “tribal” and urban, nonliterate and literate in the region. “Textual” ethnography sheds light on phenomena as diverse as the continued significance of the genealogy of the Prophet’s ancestors for representing Muslim tribal identities, the linkage between legal writing and the patriarchal authority of the landed gentry in Yemen, pamphlets and tracts in Islamic resistance to Marxist rule in Afghanistan, and the emergence of an Islamist anthropology

Keywords

writing, printing, Islam, politics, Middle East

Texts, writing, and print create social and political identities, not just mirror them. The intellectual technologies of writing and printing create not only new forms of communication, they also engender new forms of community and authority. For anthropologists, Jack Goody’s edited Literacy in traditional societies (1968; see also Goody 1977, 1986) was a significant step toward recognizing the religious and political implications of the written and printed word, and Benedict Anderson’s Imagined communities (1983) subsequently marked the point at which the transformative value of writing and printing for national and religious identities was fully realized (see Eickelman 1992; Bowen 1993). The four essays which follow deal centrally with writing, printing, and the social imagination in Middle Eastern societies. Collectively, they consolidate advances beyond earlier formulaic assumptions of a “great divide’’ between

“tribal” and urban, nonliterate and literate, in Muslim and Middle Eastern societies and suggest new ways in which ideas of text, print, and writing can shed light on religion and politics.

Daniel Varisco deals both with the historiographic representation of tribes and the sociopolitical “reality” they represent. His main focus is on why the idea of “tribe” in classical Arabic texts is closely linked to the genealogy of the Prophet Muhammad. Contemporary anthropological accounts have focused on tribe-state relations and on tribes as construed within segmentary lineage theory. By shifting his focus to the paradigm for Arab tribes implicit in medieval Arab genealogical texts—specifically, the genealogy of the ancestors of the Prophet Muhammad—Varisco assesses: (1) the significance of the terms used in medieval texts to describe tribal units, (2) the structure of tribal relations, and (3) the historical and political “credibility” of representations of Muhammad’s ancestors. Varisco’s shift in emphasis in the study of Arab tribal genealogies accords with Jon Anderson’s work on the Pakhtun of Pakistan and Afghanistan. Pakhtun genealogies look like segmentary representations, Anderson writes, but in the end account for little in terms of tribal political formations; named lineages are foundation stories which, in the case of the Pakhtun, link the Pakhtun to Mecca: “The ancestor of all Pakhtun, Qais, went to Mecca at the time of Muhammad and received Islam direct from the Prophet of God,” thereby setting the Pakhtun apart from their neighbors (J. Anderson 1993).

Varisco’s Qur’anic epigraph and opening question, “What is a Tribe?” recall Jacques Berque’s “Qu’est-ce qu’une ‘tribu’ nord-africaine?” (What is a North African “tribe?”) (Berque 1974 [orig. 1953]). For Berque, the notion of “tribe” was as central to cultural and political identity in North Africa as was the idea of “nation” to nineteenthcentury Europe, the subject of Ernest Renan’s famous essay, “Qu’est-ce qu’une nation?” (What is a nation?) (1882). As a serving colonial officer, Berque may, of course, have been impeded from asking “Qu’est-ce qu’une ‘nation’ nord-africaine?” Setting “tribe” in inverted commas, he refrained from imputing a fixed meaning to the concept and from suggesting that it was the North African equivalent of “nation.” Berque was a postmodernist before his time: European and Arab representations of tribe were intertwined with the fluidity of social and political life that these representations sought to depict. The powerful currents of mid-century nationalism did not eclipse all other forms

of political and religious identity in significance. Similarly, Varisco suggests a reading of classical genealogical texts at variance with contemporary anthropological convention yet in accord with enduring issues of Muslim identity.

With the exception of Joseph Chelhod (1974) on the ambiguity of kinship terms in Arab genealogical literature, Pierre Guichard (1977) on Muslim Spain, and Paul Dresch on Yemeni historiography (1989: 158–235, esp. 176–179), few anthropologists or social historians have applied contemporary anthropological questions to medieval Muslim genealogical representations. Chelhod concluded that the medieval Arab genealogical literature is too ambiguous to use for a “paradigm” of tribal structure in Arab societies. Guichard, for his part, transposes Ernest Gellner’s North African models of Berber tribal organization to Muslim Spain, including (with critical reservations) a presumed oscillation between tribal strong men and “democracy,” noting that genealogies encompass political contradictions (1977: 66–69).

Both contemporary anthropologists and medieval Arab genealogists (who often recorded the usages of Berber and Persian-speaking groups as well) depict tribe as an “essentially contested concept,” involving “endless disputes about its proper understanding and use on the part of its users,” much like disputes over the “true” meaning of democracy (Gallie 1968: 157–158). As in present-day genealogies, those of the Prophet’s ancestors record only those names needed to make sense of politically significant tribal relationships. To express these relationships, the literati who constructed the Arabic texts Varisco analyzes preferred the metaphor of body parts, but Varisco is uncertain that the tribespeople whose genealogical relationships are represented shared this metaphor. Based on contemporary genealogical usages, Varisco concludes that, in a general sense, the genealogical template that medieval scholars offer for Muhammad’s ancestors could plausibly correspond to what happened in history. However, this template loses credibility when the specific ancestors are plotted out.

Even if the Prophet’s significant ancestors are “mythical,” bearing no direct relation to historical events, it is not clear why medieval genealogists represented the Prophet’s ancestors as they did.

Traced back to Adam, the tribal representations of the Prophet's genealogy, Varisco argues, symbolically redefine the lives of Abraham and other "biblical heroes" so that they are linked to Mecca as "the sacred center of the Islamic universe." The genealogy of the Prophet "combines the original biblical ancestry of Abraham with a distinctively Arab stock," thus providing a sacred charter linking "a seventh-century Arab from the small Meccan tribal group of Quraysh with the God of Abraham revered by Jews and Christians." At the same time, the genealogy suggests the contest for authority within the developing Islamic community.

Varisco argues that the genealogy's lack of historicity should not be confused with its credibility. Following Edmund Leach's analysis of the genealogy of King Solomon, Varisco looks particularly at the role of the tribes from which the wives of the Prophet's ancestors came. These relationships, he argues, reflect the give-and-take of tribal politics, defining Muhammad's Quraysh as the dominant lineage and the only serious contender for leadership of the Islamic community. Hence the choice of wives of the Prophet's ancestors further validates Muhammad's links to Abraham and the preeminence of Quraysh. The kind of tribal relationships created by the paradigm of the Prophet's ancestors is more like a royal lineage than—as some contemporary anthropologists might anticipate—descent groups in opposition to one another. "The focal point of the genealogy is Muhammad himself," not the Quraysh as a tribe. As such, it forms part of "the evolving Islamic discourse" on the Prophet and prophecy.

Brinkley Messick does for "textual ethnography, in which local documents serve as points of departure for an integrated contextual, doctrinal and discursive analysis," what Clifford Geertz's "Deep Play" (1973) does for ethnography without written texts. Geertz begins with the cockfight, Messick with court and settlement documents. Messick argues that these texts are transformative and not simply epiphenomenal to other events.

Messick's point of departure is a protracted family dispute which began in 1935, ostensibly over two family trusts (waqfs) established by a wealthy landowner, Hajj Muhammad, in a Yemeni provincial center. It was

eventually settled with a 1947 shari‘a (Islamic law) court ruling and a settlement by binding arbitration the following year. Although the court judgment appears in official registers, copies of the arbitrated settlement mentioned in the court papers are held only by the interested parties. Because such “spiral texts” are rarely found in archives, they seldom are encountered by historians. This particular case stood out both for its intractability and the involvement of a prominent judge and the heir to the Yemeni throne.

Messick’s account is one of the few concerning Islamic court writings and procedures that is readily accessible to nonspecialists. He compares Hajj Muhammad’s public and private trusts with their American equivalents: just as Americans have the Rockefeller Foundation as a public trust, so is Hajj Muhammad’s name read out weekly in the mosque of his home town as a principal donor. The properties involved in American trusts are mainly securities. In the Yemen landholdings predominated: “While one set of beneficiaries cut coupons, the other received bags of grain.” Just as family trust law was being established in nineteenth-century America, Europeans in the Middle East, North Africa, and British India attacked Muslim family trusts to enlarge state control, alienate land for settlers, and subject holdings to taxation.

Messick writes, “Like the property relations to which they refer, textual relations are relations between humans,” with court judgments and settlements the sites of textual combat. In the Yemen, as in countries such as Oman and Morocco, legal texts were “active instruments” defining descent groups. A donor could “effectively create descent groups based on collective property holding and corporate interests in trust revenues.” People carefully guarded their documents, “rolling and folding them, placing them in protective tubes.” Judges who, as authors of rulings, staged quotations, citations, and evidence, managed antagonistic positions, assessed competence and relevance, and engaged in “fundamental” acts of power and the creation of social facts.

If the family trust was a basic instrument for sustaining the patrilineal descent groups of landed gentry in Yemen, the political and economic changes of the 1950s led to the decline of the household patriarch. Messick

suggests that the “basic structural problems” of the landed gentry involved not just the “special position” of the eldest male sibling, but also the conflicting interests of multiple wives and their respective sets of descendants, endogamous versus exogamous marriages, and a contest over which beneficiaries would administer the family trust.

Messick elsewhere (1993: 167–186) argues that resolving such issues was a “central activity” of the pre-1962 Yemeni state. The case of Hajj Muhammad’s estate shows how the judge queried the imam (royalist Yemen’s head of state and religious leader) in order to confirm his interpretation. The judgment and settlement documents present “a complex textual venue for the interpretive weighting and interrelating of the perceived facts of the world and the received formulations of doctrine,” showing the multiple interpretive levels involved in creating legal texts and expressing “styles of power and authority.”

Of the four essays David Edwards’ deals most explicitly with the political implications of “print Islam” (Eickelman 1989: 17). Edwards’ main theme is that Afghan Islamic political movements strengthened their position by harnessing “new media technologies.” The political use of print technologies at different historical moments, compressed into little more than a century in Afghanistan, in contrast to the more leisurely evolution of print communication in Europe over half a millennium, altered how people talked about Islam, practiced it, and related Islam to their social and political actions.

The first Afghan newspapers of the late nineteenth century had a limited circulation, although, as in Central Asia at about the same time (Khalid 1992: 116), they reached a small literate elite which had an influence far beyond its numbers. Newspapers also provided a focus for the development of political ideas independent of court, tribe, and mosque and intensified the growing divide between the largely “traditional” rural milieu and the reformist urban one.

By the late 1920s and 1930s newspapers in Afghanistan had become a major vehicle for advancing political causes. Edwards argues that newspapers gave

prestige to the government internationally and to Afghanistan’s “small but important” intelligentsia; they offered employment to graduates of Afghanistan’s secondary schools and madrasas (religious schools); and—through subsidies—they restrained potential dissidents by keeping them on the government payroll.

By the late 1940s secular modernists had begun to speak out against the traditional religious establishment. Religious leaders were unprepared for “the new modes of disseminating political propaganda and organizing popular movements” that secular leftists began to employ, so that traditionalist religious scholars were initially on the defensive.

By the 1960s leftist newspapers flourished, but by 1968 only one major independent religious newspaper, Gahiz, had emerged. Leftist newspapers and pamphlets, supplemented by Soviet radio propaganda in Afghan languages, provided arguments for supporters to use against Islam. In turn, Gahiz and religious tracts, in Afghanistan and elsewhere in the Muslim world in the 1960s and 1970s (Eickelman 1989: 4–5), provided crucial texts and arguments for Muslim intellectuals. Although Gahiz countered Marxist propaganda, unlike its Marxist counterparts, it was not tied to the organizational activity in which leftists were engaged.

Whatever the major differences between secular leftists and religious modernists in the 1960s, both were “first-generation literates and graduates of new government schools,” forming an “imagined community” at the core of the state and its ancillary institutions. Although party newspapers had only a limited circulation, like their religious counterparts they formed unified fields of exchange which offered “narrower bases of practical association” than the state. Indeed, Edwards notes that Lenin’s view of newspapers as a vehicle for party mobilization—“an enormous pair of smith’s bellows that would fan every spark of the class struggle and of popular indignation”—were more relevant to Afghanistan than Benedict Anderson’s view of them as fostering national identity.

Political radicals encouraged confrontation and polarization in Afghanistan through pamphlets, translating the emotions generated by newspapers and demonstrations into “political ideologies and concrete organizational structures.” Pamphlets, notes Edwards, conveyed ideas and articulated “new modes of political relationship based on obedience to authority, organizational secrecy, and the relentless pursuit of party objectives.” This linkage between pamphlets and political organization was pioneered in Afghanistan by the Marxist parties and their Soviet sponsors, but by the mid-1960s, some Muslim organizations—notably the Muslim Youth Organization at Kabul University—emulated this lead—inspired both by their Marxist antagonists and the model of Egypt’s Muslim Brotherhood, observed first-hand by Afghans who studied in Cairo in the 1950s.

Most of the distributed tracts were only a few pages in length or were hand-copied “notes” written in local languages—not in Persian or Arabic, the principal languages of an earlier generation of religious scholars and literati. Each recipient was expected to make ten or twenty copies by hand. Like dissident samizdat literature in Russia, receiving such notes was an act of political engagement, so the tracts not only communicated ideas but also established lines of communication and authority. More than books and newspapers, these hand-copied notes created audiences, engaging recipients in an ever-widening network of transmission which constituted a “foundational” political act, transforming the Muslim Youth “from a more or less egalitarian study circle into a hierarchically organized political party, the Hizb-i Islami Afghanistan, bent on the violent overthrow of the [Marxist] Afghan government.” Audio cassettes, easy to smuggle and readily duplicated, are beginning to replace pamphlets for at least some forms of religious debate throughout the Muslim world, although the pamphlet has the advantage of greater anonymity for the author. Thus in Morocco, the preachers of “subversive” religious cassettes are almost entirely foreign, beyond the reach of the local security apparatus.

In earlier generations the exposure of students to Islamic ideas would have been through the Qur’an and religious treatises. In Afghanistan of the 1960s and 1970s, as elsewhere in the Muslim world (Eickelman 1992), the first understanding of Islamic ideas—with the exception of some Qur’anic verses memorized as a child—were pamphlets and notes. As Edwards writes, these “brought Islam out of the culture of the madrasa” and allowed Muslims to

talk about current events and “challenge the assertions of leftists who denigrated the role of religion in the Modern world.”

The main printed vehicle of the exiled Islamic resistance in Afghanistan was magazines, which contained interviews with representatives of other Muslim countries, works by leading Muslim authors, history, and the obituaries of martyrs, implicitly organized by seniority in the resistance movement. As with the Kabul newspapers of the 1920s, these magazines provided employment for educated refugees. Slick magazines also helped project a substantial and legitimate image of Islamic resistance organizations as statesman-like and suggested that obedience to the aims and authority of the movement is like obedience to the Prophet.

Richard Tapper’s “ ‘Islamic Anthropology’ and the ‘Anthropology of Islam’ ” shifts attention to a form of argument which could be considered a consequence of the “objectification” of religious knowledge, when religion is explicitly thought of as a system by large numbers of people. Tapper points out that there has been an anthropology of Islam, an application of the current methods of cultural and social anthropology to “the study of Islam as a world religion” and to related social institutions. In contrast, Islamic—or, as Tapper suggests, Islamist—anthropology means an anthropology derived broadly from Islamic texts or some other identifiably Islamic base.

Some of the authors Tapper discusses are concerned only with Muslim societies, others with applying universal Islamic principles to societies worldwide. Even the best of these studies, however, suffers from outdated critiques of the Western anthropology that Islamic anthropology is intended to replace. Merryl Wyn Davies, for example, argues that various modern Western anthropologies, despite their claim to universality, interpret “other” societies only in terms that are firmly rooted in the “intellectual tradition and discourses of western civilization” (1988: 25), although she also asserts that Western anthropology tends to collapse history into a “Malinowskian reformulation” (1988: 140). Davies cites Raymond Firth’s Elements of social organization (1961 [orig. 1951]) as an up-to-date example of anthropological analysis, and concentrates most of her attention on the shortcomings of a Malinowski-style functionalism. Tapper observes that her appeal for fresh approaches to anthropological understandings of “other”

societies have characterized “non-Muslim” approaches for several decades. Prevalent trends which she does not discuss include gender studies, a close attention to language and communication, reflexivity, “dialogic inquiry,” and ideas of history and historical thought considerably more nuanced than the midcentury notions which she sees as normative of “Western” anthropology today.

Akbar Ahmed (1986) is even less successful in this respect, using extensive extracts from John Beattie’s Other cultures (1964) to demonstrate Western anthropology’s “general theoretical stagnation,” but ignoring virtually all subsequent work and offering nothing but a vague promissory note on what an “Islamic” anthropology would look like. Indeed, as Tapper points out, Ahmed’s specific discussion of Islamic societies offers only taxonomies and “models” which derive little from an understanding of Muslim scholars writing on their own societies, notwithstanding invocations of the medieval Muslim scholars Ibn Khaldun (d. 1406) and al-Biruni (d. 1048).

The emergence of an Islamist anthropology in recent years might be seen as part of a general trend to which Akbar Ahmed referred in a lecture presented in Pakistan in 1987. According to a newspaper report (Hyatt 1987),

<quote>

One Pakistani gentleman asked, “Why Islamic anthropology? There’s no such thing, just like there’s no Islamic bomb.” This drew a laugh from the audience and Dr. Ahmed replied in an equally light way, “Well, since everything has to have a label I thought I’d give it one too.’’ On a more serious note he added that there is British, Russian and other kinds of anthropology, so why not Islamic?

</quote>

Most Russian ethnographers would be the first to admit that much of their work was conducted until recently within the confines of an ideological straightjacket (Khazanov 1992). This shortcoming may inadvertently now characterize Islamist anthropology. Tied to a self-consciously elaborated ideological system, an Islamic anthropology, as opposed to an anthropology of Islam, risks limiting itself to dogma and guarded internal debate, much like the other “isms” to which Ahmed refers. Alain Roussillon (1990: 237–47) points out that’most Islamist visions of the social sciences reject their universality, arguing instead for an Islamic “specificity.” To the point, he cites Ismail Faruqi (cited in Roussillon 1990: 245): “Muslim social scientists are the ‘ulama [religious scholars] of today’s umma [worldwide community of Muslims]. They are its strategic planners and the designers of its future.” Olivier Roy adds: “The exact sciences fascinate the Islamists, not the human sciences, because the human sciences are a process of deconstructing humankind in general.” Even Ibn Khaldun’s famous concept of ‘asabiyya (group solidarity) is viewed with suspicion by Islamists, because Western sociologists find it such an interesting springboard for the study of nationalism, tribes, ethnicity, classes, social categories, and interest groups (Roy 1992: 97–99).

Of course, Roussillon and Roy use the term “Islamist” to mean “Islamic activist,” but they, like the authors of the texts analyzed by Tapper, advocate an Islamic anthropology or social science based on Islamic texts and themes. As Tapper writes, Islamic anthropology “should be taken seriously because it addresses a wide audience, avows its ideological base and invites critical discussion.”

But perhaps the most vigorous Islamic anthropology would be one which did not have to assert a dubious autonomy from Western scientific traditions. Its advocates might heed the insight of the Zairean anthropologist and literary critic, V.Y. Mudimbe, who finds unconvincing the efforts to assert an African anthropology without Western antecedents. He writes, “It seems impossible to imagine any anthropology without a Western epistemological link” (1988: 19). Western traditions of science, including anthropology, are now “part of Africa’s present-day heritage.” Rather than cut African anthropology from its epistemological roots, Mudimbe argues that

<quote>

one might also conceive the intellectual signs of otherness not as a project for the foundation of a new science, but rather as a mode of reexamining the journeys of human knowledge in a world of competing propositions and choices (p. 79).

</quote>

In a parallel vein on the anthropology of Islam, Tapper writes that whatever “ism” is attached to anthropology, anthropologists ask “awkward questions” about “how ideologies are constructed, and how language and other systems of symbols are manipulated.” The best anthropologies of Islam, by Muslims and non-Muslims alike, are created by those who have resisted the tyranny of scripturalist approaches, whether “Orientalist” or Islamist. He concludes: “The anthropology of Islam involves translating and humanizing ordinary believers’ cultures as well as analyzing the production and use of Islamic ‘texts.’ ” Tapper clearly advocates what Islamists would call a “deconstructionist” position in that he re-introduces the question of what is the “Islam” that anthropologists and Islamic activists study and on which there is a continuing—perhaps “essentially contested”—debate over the significance of texts, practice, beliefs, and history. Tapper’s essay is not intended as the last word on Islamist anthropology. He points to an intellectual development which merits the same attention in English-speaking scholarship it is accorded in the Francophone world of Roy and Roussillon.

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The texts presented here were collected during three periods of field research in Morocco. I am grateful to the Foreign Area Fellowship Program for support during the initial fieldwork period of October 1968 to June 1970, to the Foreign Currency Program of the Smithsonian Institution for the summer of 1972 and to the Social Science Research Council for the following summer. I also wish to thank T. O. Beidelman for his comments on an earlier draft of this paper and Bouzekri Draioui for assistance in the transcription and translation of these texts.

Orthography: I have transcribed the consonants of Moroccan colloquial Arabic with the standard symbols used for classical Arabic. For the six vowels of Moroccan Arabic I have used the system employed by Harrell (1966: xm-xix). These are as follows: et very short but like the e in English masses; o, very short but like the u of put; a, usually like the a of mad; a, a shorter version of a; i, exactly as in French vite; and u, as in French fou. Dots under consonants indicate that they are emphatic.

One of the more valuable scholarly legacies of the French Protectorate in Morocco is a rich collection of ethnographic and linguistic texts in regional Berber and Arabic dialects. The most thorough of these collections are exemplified by Louis Brunot’s Textes arabes de Rabat (1931a; 1952) and Levi-Provencal’s Textes arabes de l’Ouargha (1922). The form of these collections is fairly standard. Texts taken from native informants are presented in an exact phonetic transcription which is accompanied by a largely unvocalized Arabic script that approximates colloquial usage. The texts were also translated into French, annotated and complemented by analytic glossaries that explored the exact nuances of meaning and phrase, contrasting regional variations.

The goal of these studies was to present what was considered to be the characteristic ‘everyday’ features of colloquial usage, not to present the full range of verbal competence as conceived by Moroccans themselves[1]. In

fact, Brunot’s study originally formed the base of a language training manual for French Native Affairs officers. As a consequence of this goal, certain verbal forms were explicitly neglected. In explaining why he chose to present only those texts that illustrate ‘spontaneous’, or conversational, forms of the Rbati dialect, Brunot argued that

<quote>

... dans les contes purement folkloriques, la langue est stereotypee, genee par la croyance, generalement repandue, que l’alteration d’une phrase ou d’un mot porte malheur, encombree d’expressions et de tournures etrangeres ou perimees; au regard de la linguistique, ils sont peu avantageux (1931a: I) [2].

</quote>

Admittedly, texts describing routine activities, familiar objects or rituals, and certain sorts of stories and fables are more useful for the acquisition of conversational competence or for the grammatical description of a language and its vocabulary than materials requiring substantial ethnographic glosses in order to be understood. Hence the forms of narrative more emphasized in these collections are Jha stories and animal tales (e.g., Levi-Provencal 1922: 3). These stories generally take the form of fables; their simplified moral perspective requires minimal explanation [3]. There are also a number of Moroccan stories existing in translation alone, but these are generally selected to be entertaining to Western audiences and to be inoffensive in content. These collections generally contain no scholarly apparatus and frequently do not even indicate the point of origin of the texts. To be generous, such translations appear only to try to capture the ‘spirit’ of the original, rather than its exact narrative development. Les joy euses histoires du Maroc (1931&), assembled by Louis Brunot for the Exposition Coloniale of 1931, was one of the more acceptable forerunners for this type of collection.

One of the most difficult and consequently neglected genres of oral tradition is that of maraboutic myths, which form an integral part of Islam as popularly understood by rural Moroccans and among traditionally oriented townsmen. These myths are thought of as explaining how particular social groups are

linked to the wider Islamic world. They ‘explain’ how certain tribes became situated in particular locales, legitimate the bar aka of marabouts and associate them with specific tribal groups and regions. Although the themes of some of these myths are replicated throughout Morocco, the comprehension of specific myths requires a detailed knowledge of local hagiography, place names and other highly specific ethnographic data in order to follow the narrative.

Despite the difficulty of these texts, it is surprising that there exists no full presentation of one of them in Arabic. After all, Morocco has been subject to sustained ethnographic attention from the beginning of this century to the present and the importance of these myths has been repeatedly recognized. There are a few translations which appear faithfully to follow the contours of the original and to be fairly integral, but most myths are presented in a synoptic form which purports to exemplify narrow conceptions of social structure and often gives no reliable indication of the original text[4].

Even a recent study by Mohammed Boughali (1974), one of the first by a North African to explore the cosmology implicit in traditional thought, offers no extended description of such myths. Yet one of Boughali’s principal arguments is that space in Moroccan society is traditionally conceived as hagiographic. He appears to take for granted the myths and oral traditions upon which his argument depends, for there are only vague references to them in his study (e.g., 1974:174–176). It is only to be hoped that Boughali and others are actively recording such oral traditions, for he acknowledges that recent social and economic transformations are rapidly eroding them. Much of the material on which his study is based already exists only in the memories of older informants (1974:14). As traditional society continues to be broken up, the cosmology underlying these practices will become harder to perceive; the absence of the original forms of these generally unwritten myths will make such a task impossible [5].

The principal object of this article is to present the integral texts of four of these myths, together with an annotated translation which follows as closely as possible the original text. I reserve for later an analysis of the ‘structural’ and symbolic significance of texts of this genre, after I have had an opportunity to provide more examples of them. The discussion in this article

is confined to some of the characteristics of their narrative style and composition.

*** The Maraboutic Myths of the Sherqawa

The texts presented here were collected in Boujad, Morocco, a town of roughly twenty thousand persons as of 1973. It is one of the most important pilgrimage centres in western Morocco. The shrine of the marabout Sidi Mhammed Sherqi (died 1601) is located there and about one-third of the town's population, collectively known as the Sherqawa, claim descent from him. Elsewhere I have presented ethnographic data on Boujad, its region and the Sherqawa (1972–1973; 1974a; 19746; 1976), so here I will confine myself to specific features of the texts which follow.

So far, I have collected and transcribed roughly sixty myths relating to the Sherqawa, although in no sense can these texts be considered a complete 'set'. Tribesmen and traditionally oriented townsmen throughout the Tadla plain and the adjoining regions of Shawya and Bni 'Mir are familiar with these myths, although the ability to recite them varies greatly. Only rarely do individuals in the region of Sherqawa influence know in any detail the myths associated with marabouts from other regions. Familiarity with these texts thus tends to be both geographically and socially concentric, although many of the myths link the marabouts of adjacent regions to each other.

The myths of the Sherqawa and of marabouts elsewhere in Morocco share certain general features. First, they are situated in a temporal category known as bekri ('early'), an ahistorical horizon in which events occur that refer dramatically to origins and transformations. Traditional Moroccans consider these events to explain some features of the present-day social order. Most maraboutic activities are thought to have occurred in this period. Even the exploits of living men attributed with maraboutic qualities are felt to be possible only through their ties with maraboutic ancestors associated with the period of bekri (Eickelman 1977: 50–52).

The second common feature of these myths is that uncanny events occur in them which occur in no other context. For example, Sidi Mhammed Sherqi and his sons call upon named tribal groups to settle the land, limit the exactions that Sultans can make upon their subjects, bring Islam to designated groups within their range of influence and demonstrate their bar aka by changing appearance and by such feats as finding water and transforming birds into men, as in Text II below. Implicit throughout these texts is the assumption that marabouts possess knowledge (Um) and supernatural grace (bar aka) which they can undertake to use on behalf of their clients. These attributes also legitimate their claim to superior status.

No special occasions are associated with the recitation of these myths, nor are they associated with any ritual performances. Although known by most inhabitants of the upper Tadla plain and surrounding regions, those best able to recite them are usually the claimed descendants of marabouts who serve as guardians of maraboutic shrines and as zawwars, or ‘visitors’. Individual clients make offerings (zyaras) throughout the year, but the largest offerings are generally made during the festival (musem) of Sidi Mhammed Sherqi, which is held in late September or early October — the exact timing is determined primarily by the moves of transhumant groups to their winter pastures and the advent of fall planting. During this period, groups of client tribesmen come to Boujad and make collective offerings to the Sherqawa with whom they are particularly associated.

Zawwars are those descendants of marabouts who have a special tie, usually inherited, with certain tribal groups and collect offerings from them in exchange for invoking the good offices of their maraboutic ancestors on behalf of the clients. Twice a year, during the spring division of herds after their return from winter pastures and in June, after the harvests, “visitors’ go to their client groups to demand the “share’ (haqq) of their ancestor. Zaw-wars also take offerings in the fall, when client groups arrive in Boujad for the annual musem. As with the guardians of shrines, z aw wars are regularly called upon to recite such myths. Such recitations are informal and frequently are interrupted by the audience. When younger tribesmen are present, their recitation is frequently accompanied by the now ubiquitous transistor radio.

*** Composition

The four myths presented in this article were recited by a woman who, along with her husband, serves as guardian for a cluster of five Sherqawa shrines located on a promontory just outside of Boujad. The most important of these is the shrine of Sid le-Ghazwani, reputed to be the youngest son of Sidi Mhammed Sherqi. In the past two decades there has been a gradual attrition of offerings to “satellite’ shrines such as that of Sid le-Ghazwani, but a sufficient number of pilgrims continue the practice so that my informant is still obliged to pay a nominal fee to the descendants of this marabout for the right to collect offerings at his shrine. One significant remaining client group of Sid le-Ghazwani is the Bni Wra of the Shawya region, who annually send representatives on their behalf to make invocations (da was) and offerings.

In an earlier presentation of Sherqawa myths, I reported the claim of my informant that the texts that she knew well enough to recite, about a dozen in all, were taught to her by her predecessor as guardian and memorized by her (Eickelman and Draioui 1973). She claimed that her predecessor had a much larger repertoire but that she memorized only those myths associated with client groups that continued to make pilgrimages to the shrine. She was by far the best narrator of these myths that I encountered during my fieldwork, both during the initial period of 1968–1970 and subsequent years. For this reason and the fact that I did not have an opportunity to witness her narrating myths to client groups, I accepted literally her claim that her repertoire was memorized and invariable. As indicated by my earlier citation from Brunot, the notion of “fixed’ texts was also postulated by the ethnographic record.

Only when I prepared the first two texts presented below, which were recorded in 1972, and compared them with earlier variants that she narrated for me in 1969 (Eickelman and Draioui 1973: sect. 6), did it become evident that the texts for these myths are not fixed. Although the basic structure of the incidents is similar in both versions, the narrative itself is elaborated in significantly different forms.

In the discussion which accompanies each text below, I present evidence which suggests that the key to understanding the composition of these myths is the use of a set of “formulas’, to adapt a term employed by Albert B. Lord. Lord, citing Milman Parry, defines a formula as a “group of words which is regularly employed under the same metrical conditions to express a given essential idea’ (1974: 4; see also 30–67). Although this notion of formula was originally intended for the composition of ballads, it can readily be adapted to the composition of narrative prose such as maraboutic myths, although they make only incidental use of metric verse. As with the ballads analyzed by Lord, certain phrases and sentences recur in similar form in these myths. Habitual usage rather than memorization appears to be the best way of explaining their acquisition.

The events depicted in these myths are thought to have happened once and for all, hence no explicit recognition is given to the inventiveness of individual narrators. However, since the main incidents depicted in the narratives are already known to the audience, narrators are free to condense certain incidents, elaborate them or omit them entirely. Audiences are not concerned with the verbatim retelling of these myths and frequently interrupt their recitation to ask that certain parts of the myth be elaborated. Sections of the narrative, especially saj’ verse and dialogue, are often repeated in more or less identical form in different myths and by different narrators. These appear to serve the same function in composition as do Lord’s formulas in ballads, just as the anticipated form of the narrative known to the audience gives reciters a basic structure which can be elaborated to suit the audience. The goal of narrators, at least those who serve as shrine guardians and ‘visitors’ is to maximize the offerings which they solicit in the name of their maraboutic ancestors. Thus social context intimately affects the form the narrative will take.

*** Text I: Sid le-Ghazwani Discovers the Source of His Baraka

| A And when SMS[6] adopted her, that Malika es-Sa’diya [7] remained with him and he married the ‘Miriya woman [8]. He married that ‘Miriya woman, she who gave birth to Sid le-Ghazwani. When the

woman went away, Laila Mm es-Sa’d [9] raised Sid le-Ghazwani. | U-melli rebbaha ‘la ydu, hadik l-Malika es-Sa’diya, bqat ‘andu, u-huwa tjewwej be-mra ‘Miriya. Meili tjewwej b-hadik le-Miriya, hiya lli weldet m’ah Sid le-Ghazwani. Meili mshat le-mra, rebbatu hadik Laila Mm es-Sa’d, rebbat Sid le-Ghazwani. |

| B When Sid le-Ghazwani raised that trouble about Baghdad [10], that Laila Mm es-Sa’d cried and fell down and lost consciousness. She fell unconscious, (then) SMS said to her: “Why are you crying?’ She replied to him: ‘Im crying over my son who is the only one who went away ’u. He said to her: “If you want to see your child, O my daughter [11] [12], you can see him every day/ She said to him: ‘O SMS, I want to see him/ He replied to her: ‘O my daughter, if you want to see him come here to me and I’ll send you to him.’ | Meili kan Sid le-Ghazwani, hazztu hadik l-feg’a l-Baghdad, hadik Laila Mm es-Sa’d bkat u-tahet u-ghabet ‘al l-ujud. Meili ghabet, gal liha esh-Shaykh Sidi Mhammed esh-Sherqi: “Lash ta-tebki?’ Galet Uh: ‘Ta-nebki ‘la weldi lli msha men dun l-ulad.’ Gal liha: ‘Ila bghdyti, a-bndyti, tshufi weldek, tkuni tshufih f-koll nhar.’ Galet lih: ‘Bghdyt a Sidi Mhammed esh-Sherqi nshufu.’ Gal liha: ‘Ila bghayti tshufih, a bnayti, aji l-‘andi u-nsdyftek l-‘dndu. ’ |

| C She came to him and he said to her: ‘Bring the plate of food.’ She brought the plate of food and put a cover on it. He put a sheepskin rug next to her. He said to her: ‘All right, sit cross-legged here.’ She sat cross-legged on top of the sheepskin. He said to her: ‘All right, go to Baghdad.’ | B-dik l-kelma dyal esh-Shaykh Sidi Mhammed esh-Sherqi, traf’et hadik es-siyda hetta l-Baghdad. Msha ka-ykol Sid le-Ghazwani men hadak t’am dyal bbah Sidi Mhammed esh-Sherqi, ma ka-yakol-sh men t’am esh-Shaykh ‘Abd l-Qader. Bqa ka-yakol men hadak t’am dyalu hetta nhar lekh-kher. |

| D With that word of SMS, that woman was carried away to Baghdad. Sid le-Ghazwani ate from the food of his father SMS; he didn’t eat the food of Shaykh ‘Abd l-Qader [13]. He kept eating that food of his father’s until the last day (of his stay). | J at l-‘dndu, gal liha: ‘Jibi t-tebsil dyal et-t’am.’ J abet et-tebsil dyal t’am, u-dayra ‘lih le-mkeb. Hatt liha l-haydora. Gal liha: ‘Iwa, trab’i hna.’ Trab’et fug men l-haydora. Gal liha: ‘Iwa, siri ta l-Baghdad.’ |

| E SMS ate and forgot, and lifted a mouthful from Ghazwani’s plate [14]. ‘O Sa’diya!’, he called to her. ‘Yes?’, she replied to him. ‘Did you take the supper to Ghazwani?’ She replied to him:
“No, 0

Sidi.’ He said to her: ‘You didn’t take him his supper but brought me something to eat. Go on! Take the plate to Sid le-Ghazwani.’ And she picked up the plate, like that, and put back in it the ball of food which he had taken. | Sidi Mhammed esh-Sherqi kd-yakol u-nsa, u-rfed l-logma men tebsilu. Gal liha: ‘A s-Sa’diya!’ Galet lih:‘N’am.’ Gal liha: ‘Dditi le-‘sha l-Ghazwani?’ Galet lih: ‘Lia, ya Sidi.’ Gal liha:
‘Ma dditi-sh lih le-‘sha, u-jayba Uy a n-nakol. Yallah, hezzi t-tebsil l-Sid le-Ghazwani. ’ U-hazzet et-tebsil, hok-kak el-logma mehtuta fih. |

| F And when that plate came to Sid le-Ghazwani, he lifted the cover, like this, and saw the mouthful placed in it[15]. He put the cover back on and didn’t eat from it. Sid le-Ghazwani said: ‘Why? My father is rich, my father is the candle of the Tadla and doesn’t need the filth of this world. And I came here and was honoured by the people, until they began to eat and (then) they returned the leftovers to me’ [16]. He supposed that it was Shaykh ‘Abd l-Qader who left that food for him. He didn’t know that it came from his father. | U-melli msha hadak et-tebsil I-and Sid le-Ghazwani, hazz men fugu le mkeb ki-hokka, u-sab el-logma mer-fuda fih. U-radd ‘lih le-mkeb u-ma kal-sh mennu, Sid le-Ghazwani gal: “Lash ana Ui bba khwaja, u-bba qendil Tadla, u-ma khassu-sh men tamu’ ed-denya. U-jit le-hna tharremt ‘and en-nas ta wellaw yaklu we-roddu liy a sh-shy ata?’ Yetshab huwa esh-Shaykh ‘Abd l-Qader lli radd Uh hadik l-makla. Ma ‘refha-sh wash jat men ‘and bbah. |

| G Shaykh ‘Abd l-Qader came to him and said: ‘Why are you upset, my boy ? ’ He replied to him: ‘I’m upset because my father is wealthy, and my father is the candle of the Tadla and my father doesn’t need the filth of this world. I came to you to eat and you give me leftovers.’ The Shaykh replied: ‘0 my boy, from the day that you came here you never ate any food from me.’ (Ghazwani) asked: ‘And from where did I eat?’ (‘Abd l-Qader) replied: ‘From your father, SMS.’ He replied to him: ‘And who brought me the food?’ He replied: ‘Laila Mm es-Sa’d who raised you, she brought you the food here and you ate it.’ | U-ja dkhal l-‘andu sh-Shaykh ‘Abd l-Qader u-gal Uh: “Lash a weldi mghdyyed?’ Gal Uh: ‘Ana Ui netgh-dyyed, Ui bba khwaja u-bba qendil Tadla, u-bba ma khassu-sh men tmu’ ed-denya. W-ana jit l-‘dndek bash et-takli u-troddi Uy a sh-shy ata. ’ Gal Uh: ‘A weldi, men nhar jiti l-‘andi, ‘mor l-makla ma keltiha men ‘andi.’ Gal Uh: ‘U-mnin kanakol?’ Gal Uh: ‘Men ‘and bbak Sidi Mhammed esh-Sherqi. ’ Gal Uh: ‘U-sh-kun Ui td-yjib Uy a t’am?’ Gal Uh: ‘Laila Mm es-Sa’d Ui mrabbyak, hiya Ui ka-tjib lik l-qawt hetta le-hna. U-rah mennu ka-takli.’ |

| H So Sid le-Ghazwani separated himself from the things of this world, went on and began going into trance, saying: ‘No one nourishes me but my dear father; if the water is low in the well it fills up and if my camel is tired it doesn’t sleep in the wilderness. Put it at the head of the caravan. Is this lazier than you or are you stingy; where are you, O men of Tadla?’ [17] And he went to Shaykh SMS and said to them: ‘No one nourishes me but my dear father.’ He fell in the lap of SMS and (SMS) said to his sons: ‘Come here, 0 brothers (of Sid le-Ghazwani).’ And he gathered all the children and said to them: ‘Say the fatha for Ghazwani. His goatskin of water has no equal; the things which all of his brothers have done, he has done alone.’ Then Sid le-Ghazwani got up from the lap of his father [18]. | U-nad Sid le-Ghazwani u-talleq ed-denya u-zad u-jayy ka-yjdeb u-ka-ygul: ‘Ma yesqini ilia bba hnini; wella ghreq l-ma fe-l-bir yemla, wella ‘ya jemli ma ybat-sh f-le-khla, diruh huwa ’ aww el l-gafla. Wash hada ‘gez menkom wella bakhlin, finkom ya rijal Tadla?’ U-jayy ta le-sh-Shaykh Sidi Mhammed esh-Sherqi, u-gal lihom: ‘Maysqini ilia bfya hnini.’ Utah fi-hjer esh-Shaykh Sidi Mhammed esh-Sherqi, u-gal lihom: ‘ajiw a le-kh-khut.’ U-jme’ l-ulad karnlin, u-gal lihom: ‘Diru fatha le-Ghazwani, ta gerba ma t’adel gerbtu, Hi diruha le-kh-khut kamlin, idirha Sid le-Ghaz-wani.’ U-‘ada nad Sid le-Ghazwani men hjer esh-Shaykh Sidi Mhammed esh-Sherqi. |

Discussion. — Paragraph A of this text summarily situates Ghazwani in the local cosmology by referring to incidents and relationships elaborated in other myths. Malika es-Sa’diya’s connexion with SMS is not sharply defined in any of these. Informants claim that she is SMS’ servant and a wet-nurse to Ghazwani. Paragraph B strongly implies the latter. If that is so, then she is of lower status than SMS, since only women of inferior status act as wetnurses. On the other hand, her konya, Sa’diya, suggests that she is of Morocco’s Sa’di dynasty and thus a sharifa, or descendant of the Prophet. It is popularly believed that SMS married a woman of this dynasty, thus demonstrating the status equivalency of descendants of the caliph ‘Umar, which the Sherqawa claim to be, and those of the Prophet.

By beginning with a condensed reference to an incident elaborated at greater length elsewhere, paragraph B indicates that the entire cycle of myths is part of the general knowledge of the audience. Note that Malika is

in an altered state of consciousness (ghabet ‘al l-ujud) when she speaks to SMS. Both this paragraph and the following elaborate on the modalities by which Ghazwani is nourished while in Baghdad. These are passed over in the earlier version of this myth.

Paragraph D strongly resembles the fourth paragraph of the earlier version, although there are differences in wording. Likewise, the incident portrayed in E, F and G is quite similar to the same incident in paragraphs five, six and seven of the earlier version. Paragraph H is, however, in marked contrast. In the earlier version, ‘Abd l-Qader divines that impudence (dsara), or rebellion against his father, brought Ghazwani to him. Ghazwani denies this, but ‘Abd l-Qader gives him a pickaxe and shovel with which to fill up seven springs. He manages to fill up all but one. Later, ‘Abd l-Qader reveals to Ghazwani the meaning of his acts. The first six springs symbolized marabouts (salehin) of lower rank than SMS. Ghazwani, as son of his father, evidently has greater power than them. ‘Abd l-Qader then reveals to Ghazwani that the final spring symbolizes SMS himself, the source of Ghazwani’s own baraka and over which he has no control. ‘Abd l-Qader adds to this baraka only a hatchet (shaquf) [19] and the springs of Mulay Ye’qub. In paragraph H of the present text, in contrast, Ghazwani goes into trance (jedba) and learns by himself what he has received from his father. Finally, the concluding incident in which Ghazwani acknowledges his father the source of his baraka and thus achieves precedence over his older brothers, does not appear in the earlier version of this myth, although a nearly identical incident occurs in text III, D, below.

*** Text II: The Curse of the Bni Wra

| A That king of theirs had cursed them. He had a very beautiful daughter and she went to get water from a well. And when she went to get water, you know how boys are, young men came to her and began joking with her disrespectfully. She went back to her father crying and sobbing. She said to him: ‘O father, if (only) you saw what they did to me, here’s what they did to me, here’s what they did to me, here’s what they did to me.’ He asked her: ‘What did they do?’ She replied: ‘They did this, they said this to me, they said that to me.’ He said to her: ‘All right.’ And he called

to them and cursed them. He said to them: ‘Go, God fly you away from me.’ And all those people flew. They became birds. | Hadak l-malik dyalhom kan da’i fihom. Kan, huma, ‘andu wahed l-bent zina bezzaf, hasna, u-mshat ka-tesgi men wahed l-bir. U-melli mshat ka-tesgi, td-t’arfi l-ulad, u-jaw ka-yetzahtmu ‘la dik l-bent u-qellu ‘liha l-‘affa. U-jat le-bbaha kd-tebki u-tenhot. Galet lih: ‘Ya bba, kun shetti ash daru liya, ma daru liya, ma daru liya.’ Gal liha: ‘Ash daru?’ Galet lih: ‘Ha daru, ha galu liya, u-ha galu liya.’ Gal liha: ‘Wakhkha.’ U-huwa y’ayyet ‘lihom, u-huwa yed’i fihom. Gal lihom: ‘Sir, Allah itayyerkom ‘liya.’ U-huma ytiru haduk en-nas, kollhom wellaw tyur. |

| B Yes, when Sid le-Ghazwani came, when the story passed to them [20], he was only passing (through their land) as he was coming from Shaykh Mulay ‘Abd l-Qader and on his way to his father. When he passed by them, he found those people, all of them, coming back in the evening, all of them birds, there weren’t any men at all. And Sid le-Ghazwani began to think about this until that matter became clear to him, and (then) he said to that king: “Why is this, everyone with you is a bird? Why is this? They seem to me to be humans, not birds.’ (The king) replied: ‘No, no, they’re only birds.’ (Ghazwani) replied: ‘No, humans. It appears to me they’re humans.’ (The king) said to him: Tf they are humans I’ll sell them to you.’ This is why he said to him: ‘Sell them to me for a bucket of gold.’ | Iwa, melli ja Sid le-Ghazwani, ghi dewweztu l-khasla l-‘ddhom, ‘i dayez huwa jayy men esh-Shaykh ‘Abd l-Qader, u-jayy l-‘and bbah. Melli daz I-dndhom, sab duk en-nas kollha td-dkhol f-le-‘shiya, kollha tyur, ma kayn-sh l-adami walu. U-bqa td-ythaqqeq Sid le-Ghazwani, u-ban lih dak esh-shi fe-l-amr dyalu, u-gal l-hadak l-malik: “‘Lash had esh-shi, koll shi ‘andek tyur. ‘Lash? Had esh-shi ra banet liya qawm, mashi hawm. ’ Gal lih: ‘La, la, ghir hawm.’ Gal lih: ‘Lia qawm. Rah ban liya l-‘anwan dyalha qawm.’ Gal lih: ‘Ila kanet qawm, be’naha lek. ’ Hiya fash gal lih: ‘Bi’ha liya b-setla dyal d-dhab.’ |

| C When he went out to bring him that bucket of gold, (the king) said to him: ‘You must show me from where you got it.’ (Ghazwani) replied: ‘That’s not your concern. I brought it from where I wanted, like that.’ Yes, when he brought it he bought those people with it. He took that stake [21] and struck it, like that. That stake. Those people got up and built him a tomb (qobba). They put a tomb over that stake (just) like the tomb here (in Boujad) and began visiting it in the name of God, the Blessed and On High, visiting it. And now that entire region, all of it, works[22] for Sid le-Ghazwani Bu Shaqur, all of them work for Bu ‘Bid [23], all of them bring the offerings (zyard) to him, and when the children of the Shaykh [24] go there, they bring their zyara. Everyone takes

care of Sid le-Ghazwani because he bought the Bni Wra as birds in the sky. | Fash khrej jab lih dik es-setla dyal d-dhdb, gal lih: ‘Khassek twerri liya mnin jettiha.’ Gal lih: ‘Ma ‘dndek nta khbar fiha. Njibha mnin bghayt, hiya hadik.’ Iwa, melli jabha, ba’hom lih. Shedd hadak l-uted u-deggu kima hokka hah. Dak l-luted, nadu haduk, le-blad, u-bnaw ‘lih qobba. Daru qobba ‘al l-luted kima had l-qobba ha hiya, u-wellaw kd-yzuruh, b-amr Llah ta-baraka wa-ta’ala ka-yzuruh. U-druk ga’ hadik en-nahiya koll-ha td-tekh-dem l-Sid le-Ghazwani Bu Shaqur, kollha khoddam Bu ‘Bid, kollha td-tjib ez-zyara lih, u-la mshaw l-ulad l-temma yjibu zyarethom, wella koll shi rafdin b-Sid le-Ghazwani ‘la khater ta-ygulu lek Sid le-Ghazwani huwa Hi shari Bni Wra tyur fe-s-sma. |

Discussion. - In the earlier version of this myth, Ghazwani goes into trance upon leaving ‘Abd l-Qader and travels from place to place, including the land of the Bni Wra. That version makes no mention of the reasons that the king cursed his people, whereas in this version they are elaborated in detail. Similarly, in the earlier version, the king receives Ghazwani as an honoured guest, sacrifices a sheep on his behalf and entertains him. Ghazwani, however, refuses to accept this hospitality until the king reveals that his people have been transformed into birds. Ghazwani possesses this knowledge without being told from the beginning, whereas in this text Ghazwani only gradually discovers this.

Finally, in paragraph C there is a truncated narrative of the exchange of gold for Ghazwani’s right to re-transform the Bni Wra into people and at the same time to make them Muslims and his clients. A slave accompanies Ghazwani to a well of gold. For the king, Ghazwani and the slave are absent for the blink of an eye; for the slave, a day and a night have passed. The other version also contains a more elaborate description of the re-transformation effected by Ghazwani. All such detail is absent from this text.

*** Text III: Sid le-Ghazwani Acquires His Hatchet (Shaqur)

| A When Sid le-Ghazwani went away from Mulay ‘Abd l-Qader, he came to where he would find that hatchet that Shaykh ‘Abd l-Qader told him about. When he got there, Shaykh SMS met him. His

appearance was changed. He also changed his clothes. When he met (Ghazwani) on the road, SMS said to him: ‘O, traveller, 0!’ Ghazwani replied: Tm here!’ SMS said: ‘O my boy, I have some poor, hungry people with me and I can find nothing to give them. Do you have anything with which you can nourish them for me?’ Ghazwani replied: ‘Yes, Mulay [25]. He who asks for something finds it. You asked to nourish the poor and even I, if I ask, will get my request/ SMS replied: ‘That which you asked for, you will find/ Ghazwani said: ‘Yes, you, bring the poor to me/ Those poor came to him. | U-melli segged men ‘dndu u-temm jay huwa fash ghadi yelqa hadak esh-shaqur Ui gal lih esh-Shaykh ‘abd l-Qader. Meili Ihag, u-huwa yet’arred lih esh-Shaykh Sidi Mhammed esh-Sherqi, u-tgellbet siftu u-gelleb el-lebsa u-t’arred lih fe-triq, gal lih: ‘Ha, hadak es-sayeh!Hal’Gallih: ‘Hana!’ Gal lih: ‘A weldi, ‘andi shi-masakin ji anin u-ma sebt ma ne’tihom. Wash ‘andek shi bash tqawtihom liya?’ Gal lih: ‘Iwa Mulay, Hi tlab shi ka-ysibu. Nta tlabti tqawti Imasakin, w-ana, ta na, ila tlabt talbti, nsibha.’ Gal lih: ‘Dak esh-shi lli tlabti, tsibih.’ Gal lih: ‘Iwa, hada, ziyyed l-masakin l-‘dndi.’ Zadu duk l-masakin l-‘dndu. |

| B Sid le-Ghazwani ordered honey, butter and bread, which came out of the earth, and those poor ate until they were full. Ghazwani said: ‘Yes, Mulay, he who makes a request gets it. Even I ask for what I want/ (Then) SMS said: ‘Ask for what you want/ Ghaz-wani replied: ‘I want you to open a hole in the ground for me, in which I can see treasure/ SMS struck his spear, like this. A hole opened and treasure appeared to him in it. Sid le-Ghazwani bu Shaqur entered and found hatchets strewn about. He began picking up those hatchets and carrying them in his arm. | ‘Amer Sid le-Ghazwani b-le-‘sel u-smen u-l-khobz kd-ykhorju men l-ard u-ka-yaklu haduk l-masakin hetta sheb’u. Gal lih: ‘A Mulay, lli tlab shi talba ka-ysibha. Ta na netlob ma bghayt.’ Gal lih: ‘Tlob lli bghdyti.’ Gal lih: ‘Bghaytek tholli liya l-bah-mut w-iban liya fih l-kenz.’ Drab Sidi Mhammed esh-Sherqi l-harba kima hokka thdll l-bahmut, ban lih fih l-kenz. Dkhal Sid le-Ghazwani bu Sha-qur u-huwa ysib shwaqer mehtutin. Bda kd-yerfed duk shwaqer w-idir fi-dra’u. |

| C He who calls from heaven called to him. He said: ‘Hey there! Take only the one that Mulay ‘Abd l-Qader ej-Jilali gave you and leave the rest. They belong to Sid l-Hafyan’[26]. Ghazwani picked one up and went on his way. When Ghazwani turned around, SMS said to him: ‘Yes, take the treasure that you want/ Ghazwani turned from it and said (to all that were there): ‘I spit on the world (d-denyd) which has betrayed me, for what is in it. The vileness of this world will remain there/ He took only the

one hatchet and went on his way. | Nadah l-munadi men es-sama. Gal lih: ‘A weldi, hah! Rfed ghi wahed lli ‘atik Mulay ‘Abd l-Qader ej-Jilali u-khelli le-khrayn. Rahom tawe’ Sid l-Hafyan.’ Rfed wahed u-khrej fi-halatu. Meili tleffet, gal lih Sidi Mhammed esh-Sherqi: ‘Iwa, rfed l-kenz lli bghdyti.’ U-huwa yetleffet liha u-gal liha: ‘Ttfu! Khenti, a d-denya, ‘la ma fik, usakh ed-denya ka-ybqa fiha. ’ Rfed menha ghir esh-shaqur u-zad fi-halatu. |

| D He came to SMS and fell on his lap. He said to the Shaykh: ‘No one gives me bar aka except my beloved father’[27]. He began weeping on his lap. SMS called to his sons: ‘Come here, my children’, until they gathered around him. He had eleven sons. When those children gathered around him, he said to them: ‘The invocation (fathd) of Ghazwani, his goatskin (of water) has no equal’[28]. | Ja l-and Sidi Mhammed esh-Sherqi. Tah fi-hejru. Gal lu: ‘Ma yesqini ilia bba hnini.’ Bda ka-yebki fi-hejru u-huwa y’ay yet l-uladu. Gal lihom: ‘Ajiw, a wladi.’ Hetta daru bih. Huma ‘andu hdash l-weld. Meili daru bih duk l-ulad, gal lihom: ‘Fat-ha l-Ghazwani ta gerba ma t’adel gerbtu.’ |

| E That Sidi ‘Abd es-Slam, ‘Owner of the Parasol ’[29], said to his father: ‘Why, O father, do you make invocations on behalf of Ghazwani ? He is the smallest and you leave me, the oldest, without.’ His father replied: ‘Go, my boy. If spittle leaves the mouth it doesn’t return to it[30]. Ghazwani struggles for it, travels at night, holds himself back (in asking for favors) and tires himself. So now, my son, he who wants to get his request (granted) will visit you, then visit (the tomb of) Sid le-Ghazwani.’ | Gal lih hadak Sidi ‘Abd es-Slam Mui le-Mdall: (‘Lah, a bba, ta d’ayti m’a l-Ghazwani? Huwa sghir u-khel-litini ana huwa le-kbir. Gal lih: ‘Sir, a weldi. Ed-defla ila kherjet men t-fomm ma bqa liha rju’. U-l-Ghazwani kafeh ‘liha u-sra ‘liha u-twakhkher ‘liha u-drab ‘liha le-mhayen. U-daba, a wlidi, lli bgha hajtu tteqda lih izu-rek, ‘ada ytenni f-Sid le-Ghazwani. |

| F This is the story of Bu Shaqur. | Hadi hiya le-hkaya dyal bu Shaqur. |

Discussion. — Paragraph A develops a theme common to these myths, the ability of marabouts to transform themselves into animals, persons of the opposite sex and otherwise to disguise themselves. While concealing his identity, SMS asks Ghazwani to nourish the poor, i.e., those who cannot reciprocate. The ability to provide such baraka for them is a sign of a marabout. It also establishes a superior status over those

who receive the benefits of such an act. Despite the changed appearance of SMS, Ghazwani appears to recognize his elevated status, since he addresses him as Mulay and already has poor with him who are seeking food.

In paragraph B, honey, butter and bread all emerge from the earth. Throughout the myths which I have collected, everything that marabouts provide comes from the earth: food, treasures, gold, water. The latter never comes from the skies.

Once Ghazwani has nourished the poor, SMS' superior status becomes clear since he in turn asks Ghazwani to request whatever he wants. This is made explicit in D, which is an abbreviated alternative to H of text I.

This text was recorded in 1969.

*** Text IV: Why Sid Deqqaq Is Not in Boujad

| A Which (of the marabout's sons) isn't here ? Sid Deqqaq isn't here, that's all. He's the one who has left the region. He left the region because of the curse of Shaykh SMS. There were some people from Meknas who used to come to Bu 'Bid Sherqi. Deqqaq began to spoil the relations between his father and those people from Meknas. He said to them: 'Why do you come to my father when he only sits with the women, paints his eyes black and reddens his lips [31] just like them?' | Sh-kun menhom ma shi hna? Sid Deqqaq, huwa Ui ma kayn-sh u-safi. Hadak Ui kharej le-blad. Hadak b-da'wet Sidi Mhammed esh-Sherqi bash kharej le-blad. Hadak, kanu shi hel Meknas kd-yjiw I-and Bu 'Bid esh-Sherqi. U-nad huwa u-harreg ma bin bbah u-bin haduk hel Meknas. U-gal lihom: "Lash ka-tjiw I-and bba, u-bba ra daymen kd-yg'ud ghir m'a en-nisa w-itkahhel w-itsuwwek kifu kif en-nisa ?' |

| B Those people from Meknas came and said this in front of Shaykh SMS. He said to them: '0 people of Meknas, I'm really going to do you in, if you don't tell me who told you that.' And they replied: '0 friend, we're not going to bring ruin upon he who said that.' The Shaykh replied:

‘Fine, that’s all right.’ | U-jaw haduk hel Meknas u-galuha goddam esh-Shaykh Sidi Mhammed esh-Sherqi, u-gal lihom: ‘A hel Meknas, ra na ghadi ndir likom wahed l-herfa ila ma geltu-sh liya sh-kun saheb had le-klam* U-galu Uh: ‘A weddi, ma ghadi-sh nharrgu b-mul had le-klam. U-gal lihom: ‘Wakh-kha! Shi bas ma kayn’ |

| C Then he said to the servant :‘Heat me a bucket of water and give it to those people for their ablutions. We want to cleanse ourselves again and pray.’ The servant heated that bucket of water and gave it to those people. They began their ablutions and found that they had changed into women. They spoke among themselves and said: ‘We’ll go and pledge our fealty [32] to Shaykh SMS.’ That thing, everything, is done by the will of God, the Blessed and Exalted, and Bu ‘Bid. | Gal l-khadem: ‘ Sakhkhini liya wahed es-setla dyal l-ma, u-‘ti l-had en-nas yetwaddaw, bghdyna njeddu l-udo u-nsalliw/ U-sakhkhnet l-kha-dem hadik es-setla dyal l-ma u-‘tatha l-haduk en-nas. U-bdaw kd-ytwaddaw u-sabu rushom kollhom nisa. U-tsa-‘ebru binathom u-galu: ‘Nemshiw u-ntbdy’u l-esh-Shaykh Sidi Mhammed esh-Sherqi. * Had esh-shi, koll shi b-‘amer Ellah tab ar aka wa-ta’ala u-Bu ‘Bid/ Sidi, *eff ‘lina, rodna kif ma konna u-hna ghadi ngulu lek sh-kun saheb da’wtek.’ U-gal lihom: ‘A weddi, le-‘fu le-Llah u-rju le-Llah, u-daba koll shi yerja’ kimma kan. U-gulu liya sh-kun saheb da’wti.’ Gal Uh: ‘Huwa weldek, Sid Deqqaq.’ |

| D So they went and implored Shaykh SMS, saying to him: ‘O Sidi, pardon us. Change us back to what we were. And we will tell you who has told us/ The Shaykh replied to them: ‘0 friends, pardon belongs to God and returns to God, and now everything returns to as it was. Now tell me who told you about me/ They replied: ‘It’s your son, Sid Deqqaq.’ | U-jaw u-zawgu fe-sh-Shaykh Sidi Mhammed esh-Sherqi u-galu Uh: (A |

| E He called to that Sid Deqqaq and said to him: “Come here, 0 Deqqaq/ His son stood in front of him. He told his son: ‘These words, everything you spread about me! Go! May God dishonour your affairs and reputation and cause your tomb to get lost.’ | U-ayyet huwa l-hadak Sid Deqqaq u-gal Uh: ‘Aji, a Deqqaq’ Ta wqef goddamu. Gal Uh: ‘Had le-klam, kollu shenne’tini fih. Sir! Ellah ishenne* khabrek w-itellef qabrek.’ |

| F And that boy, his children are here today but his tomb is not. That is because of the curse of Shaykh SMS. And we don’t know, 0 my boy, where it is or anything about him. His tomb is lost, it isn’t here, lost, yes, lost, it isn’t here. | U-hadak l-weld u-wladu druk kay-nin, u-le-qbar

dyalu ma kayn-sh. Hadi b-da’wet esh-Shaykh Sidi Mham-med esh-Sherqi, u-ma ‘rafna, a wlidi, fayn kayn. Le-qbar dyalu talef, ma kayn-sh, talef, iyeh, talef, ma kayn-sh. |

Discussion. - In many ways this text is the inverse of those dealing with Ghazwani, who also challenges his father’s authority, leaves Boujad and learns in his travels that his baraka derives primarily from his father. He returns to Boujad and acknowledges his father’s hegemony. As a consequence SMS favours him over his other sons. Deqqaq defies his father, undermines his relations with clients and is subsequently banished from Boujad without acquiring the knowledge obtained by Ghazwani.

Informants place little emphasis on SMS’ comportment, since marabouts’ conduct cannot be judged in the same way as that of ordinary men. Similarly, the deceit that SMS employs to transform the pilgrims into women is simply considered a prerogative of a marabout in his capacity to exercise his will on the social and natural orders. As a consequence of his action, the pilgrims offer him an oath of fealty.

It is interesting to note that in this myth SMS depends upon his clients to ascertain Deqqaq’s identity. In many myths SMS and other marabouts divine such knowledge. SMS’ lack of such an ability in this myth suggests that the dyadic tie with his clients is as necessary to him as it is to them.

This text was recorded in 1969.

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[1] On the importance of eliciting and describing the total range of genres of rhetoric within a culture, see Gossen (1974: 244–249).

[2] Another reason that at least certain materials were avoided was the reticence of Moroccans to discuss the activities of local marabouts (Doutte 1914: 181).

[3] Partial exceptions to the avoidance of ethnographically opaque genres of rhetoric are two bilingual collections of Moroccan proverbs, both of which suggest typical situations in which each proverb is employed and certain other data necessary for their comprehension. The best of the two collections is Westermarck (1931), since it contains a thorough index and is loosely arranged by theme. Haquim (1954) provides neither an index nor a thematic arrangement. Unfortunately, neither author situates the use of proverbs in the context of other rhetorical forms or seems to have given much attention to actual social contexts in which they are learned or employed.

[4] The most complete translations occur in the earlier French ethnographies. The best of these are Doutte (1914: 172—181), Brunel (1926: 37—45; 1955: 24—41), and Bel (1938:392–400). Other translations include Berque (1955:290–291), Jemma (c. 1972: 23–26), Gellner (1969:174–178), Crapanzano (1973:31–47 [fairly complete]), and Rabinow (1975: 18–21). The end of the latter text appears defective in translation. Cf. parts of the same cycle of myths in Geertz (1968: 32–35).

[5] In the absence of a properly constituted text it is generally impossible to offer reinterpretations of textual materials as fashions change in anthropological theory. On the importance of the thorough presentation of such texts see Hymes (1971: 298).

[6] Abbreviation of Sidi Mhammed Sherqi in the following texts.

[7] This is the proper name of a servant who appears in several other myths. The titles to these texts are supplied by me and thus are not part of the texts themselves.

[8] This incident is elaborated in the text published in Eickelman and Draioui (1973: sect. 5). In it, SMS takes a woman from the Bni *Mir and marries her, initially against the wishes of the tribe.

[9] An alternative name for Malika es-Sa ‘diya.

[10] The Trouble about Baghdad’ refers to an incident elaborated in Eickelman and Draioui (1973: sect. 6), the first seven paragraphs of which are a variant of this text. There, Ghazwani asks that his father yield authority to him, because he is younger and more vigorous. SMS refuses, so Ghazwani falls into a trance (a common device to indicate temporal or spatial movement in these myths) and goes to Mulay ‘Abd l-Qader in Baghdad.

[11] I.e., of the sons of SMS (cf. text IV). It is significant that in all these texts only Ghazwani, who sets out on his own for a period, gains the knowledge that his baraka is derived almost entirely from his father.

[12] Bnayti, a diminutive, used here to indicate familiarity or endearment.

[13] Regarded as the source of mystic inspiration for many marabouts of western Morocco.

[14] The informant demonstrated the gesture by which food is rolled with the fingers into a ball before being eaten. Food replaced in a plate and served in this fashion would obviously be a leftover.

[15] This incident is recounted in an almost identical fashion in the earlier version.

[16] It is a sign of inferior status to be offered leftovers or to be served from plates that have already been offered to more distinguished guests.

[17] Part of this quotation is in saj* verse and also occurs in a song popular on the Tadla plain. Its meaning seems to be that if a marabout is capable of working effectively on behalf of his clients, then they should be generous in their offerings. These particular phrases are often used by zdwwars in the course of exacting offerings from their clients.

[18] I.e., Ghazwani, having recognized the source of his bar aka, reached maturity at the same time.

[19] Ghazwanfs laqab, or nickname, is Bu Shaqur.

[20] This reference is clearer in the version reported in Eickelman and Draioui (1973: sect. 6, paragraphs 8–13), where the Bni Wra incident is closely tied to Ghazwani's visit to Mulay 'Abd l-Qader.

[21] L-uted, a peg used to tether animals or to set up a tent, i.e., to fix to a given place.

[22] Ta-tekhdem l-, 'working for'. An idiom used to indicate a client relationship with a marabout.

[23] An alternative name for SMS.

[24] L-ulad, The children’, refers here to the descendants of SMS who collect the ‘share of the shaykh’ (l-hdqq dyal e^-shaykh) from client groups.

[25] This is a title ordinarily reserved for shorfa, descendants of the Prophet Muhammad.

[26] Sid l-Hafyan is considered to be the son of Sidi Hmed l-Mursli, also a Sherqawi. Members of the ecstatic Hmadsha order make annual pilgrimages to his shrine in Boujad, during which they break clay jugs over their heads. Informants say that until the practice was forbidden, hatchets were used and the Hmadsha frequently injured themselves while in trance.

[27] This quotation is in saf verse. The same phrase occurs in text I, H.

[28] This phrase also occurs in text I, H.

[29] Another son of SMS, whose shrine is located next to Ghazwani’s.

[30] A proverb meaning ‘I stand by what I’ve said’.

[31] Itsuwwek, a verb referring to the use of a dye by women which reddens their lips.

[32] Ntbay’u. The same verb is used for the swearing of allegiance to the king.

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** Islam and the district paradigm: Emergent trends in contemporary Muslim society

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Although Said’s Orientalism (1978) captured and expressed what was a powerful trend among Third World scholars, it may be time for us to move ahead from that position—to turn inward and dispassionately examine our own societies. Self-knowledge may assist us in improving them. This article is, accordingly, an exercise in social anthropology: it is neither philosophic nor historical in content. I will discuss Muslim society as it is, not as it should be. I

believe social anthropology has much to contribute both in academic thought and in practical affairs (see, for instance, Ahmed 1980b). My aim here is to identify what is stirring in the Muslim world, as well as to investigate its causes by elucidating the principles of social process in contemporary Muslim society, with special reference to Pakistan.[1] I will also analyse the dialectics of forces creating tension between tradition and modernity in Muslim society in these last decades of the twentieth century. The unrest remains largely unstudied and, on the surface, inexplicable. Its complexity and the diversity of the contexts within which it appears defy easy analysis.

Perceptible beneath the ferment are shadowy figures, no more than simulacra, in the shape of religious leaders—mullahs, maulvis, sheikhs, or ayatullahs—who explicitly challenge the ideological tenets of the modern age. For instance, emphasis is placed on the central role of God and a reversion to fundamentalist ideology; revulsion is expressed against materialism as a philosophy and code of conduct ; and the target is not the king or president as a symbol of the state, but the modem state apparatus itself. Further, contrary to accepted belief, these movements are a result of general economic betterment, not deprivation. They are revolutionary in form and content; death and destruction follow in their wake. Transformation of the social and political structure, not merely a change of government, is desired; it is not only the kings of Islam who sleep uneasily.

A traditional analysis of these movements casts them as revolts against legitimate authority—translated from notions of state and nationhood, order and rebellion, the major themes of modem political discussion. A corollary of this hypothesis is the simplistic placing of such endeavours within an anti-Western framework. Muslim revolts, from Sudan to Swat, and their leaders have interested the West over the last few centuries and provided the stereotype of the ‘mad mullah’ (Talhami 1981; Voll 1981; Churchill 1972:29). The implicitly hostile reaction of the West to the contemporary movements of Islamic society and their antiestablishment religious leaders may be partly explained as a historically conditioned response to this stereotype.[2] During the colonial phase of modem Islamic history, the movements were explicitly anti-Western and anticolonial, but this is not the case today. In fact, the phenomenon is much more complex than it appears. These movements are aimed primarily within the society and operate through local

ethnic patterns. Opposition to established authority, whether Islamic or extrareligious, is a secondary feature.

In the last few years, movements have taken place m very different regions —from Kano in Nigeria to Wana in Pakistan. The attack on the mosque at Mecca—the very core of the Islamic world—illustrates the seriousness and the significance of the contemporary Muslim mood. Recent events in Iran provide dramatic evidence of the revolutionary aspects of Islamic movements. Many other such upheavals, smaller and less dramatic, may have gone unreported, and more can be expected to take place. Understanding these movements and their long-term impact on social structure and organisation is fundamental for Muslims and those dealing with Muslim societies. Anthropological methods may provide useful tools for this task through the analysis of small, traditional Muslim groups in situations of change and conflict. Certain methodological adjustments may, however, be required for such an analysis.

The study of power, authority, and religious status (the central issues of Muslim society) by political scientists, sociologists, and historians has rested largely on traditional methods and holistic analysis. These studies tend to concern themselves with the problems of rulers, dynasties, legitimacy, succession, and the control of armies and finances, on the one hand, and with issues of orthodoxy and legality, on the other. Conceptually, the canvas and the configurations are large; the area covered and the time spans are also extensive. It may be heuristically useful to look also beneath the surface of the large configurations of Muslim society and away from their main centres of power when examining social structure and process. Rather than the typical anthropological village, however, the focus of attention should be the critical intermediary level, the district or agency, the study of which remains neglected.[3]

Three broad but distinct spheres of leadership, interacting at various levels, may be identified at the district or agency level of society— traditional leaders (usually elders), official representatives of the established state authority, and religious functionaries. The last group is the least well defined, and hence ambiguity in its locus and elasticity in its role are apparent. Each

group is symbolically defined in the society by its base of operations—the house(s) of the chief or elders, district headquarters (flying the government flag), and the central mosque. Personnel from these three spheres of leadership vie for power, status, and legitimacy in society. The competition is exacerbated by the fact that all the major participants are Muslims; there are no simple Muslim versus nonMuslim categories to fall back on as in the recent colonial past. Some form of alliance and collaboration between traditional leaders is characteristic of district history. It is the religious leaders who must confront the other two if he is to expand his role in society. This leads to an important question: Who speaks for the society?

Having identified some of the core features at the district level, 1 will proceed to construct what may be termed the Islamic district (or agency) paradigm of the sociocultural process—one that is conceptually precise, empirically based, and placed within the regional political framework.[4] The Islamic district paradigm may assist us in discovering the meaning and structure beneath the diversity of contemporary Muslim society. The paradigm, it is suggested, is a predictive model. It will, therefore, help us both in examining Muslim society and in predicting developments in it. At the core of the Islamic district paradigm I shall place ethnographic analysis; not only is it the most relevant but may allow me, as a social anthropologist, to make some contribution. This article is thus constructed around an extended case study of traditional agnatic rivalry[5] in a tribal Agency in Pakistan, the central actor of which was the Mullah of Waziristan.[6] My own role as Political Agent from 1978 to 1980 allows me to comment on the narrative from within the structure.

The district paradigm, by definition, suggests the perpetuation of one aspect of the colonial encounter. The district structure and personnel, with its official head the district commissioner (or, in the Agency, the Political Agent), were imposed by the British. Since colonial times, status and authority in the district have rested largely in district officials as representatives of an omnipotent central government. District officers were the mai-baap (mother-father) of the South Asian peasantry. The continuing importance of the district and its personnel after independence, in spite of its clear association with the colonial past, heightens tension in society. Although ‘native,’ the administrative personnel reflect ambivalence in their dealings with other groups in society and may be viewed by them as distant

and unsympathetic. The contemporary power and importance of district officials is further exaggerated by the suspension of normal political activities (a common phenomenon during periods of martial law). The district paradigm may be of direct use for the study of other tribal agencies in Pakistan and perhaps for other Pakistani districts as well. It may perhaps also be usefully applied, although with reservations regarding the contextual framework, in other countries with large Muslim populations where the British colonial administrative structure survives, such as Bangladesh and even Nigeria.

The case in hand is based in South Waziristan Agency, Pakistan. The Agency population, according to the last official census in 1972, was about 300,(MM), divided into two major Pukhtun tribes, the Mahsuds and the Wazirs. The tribes—segmentary, egalitarian, acephalous, and living in low-production zones—are somewhat similar to other Muslim tribes in North Africa and the Middle East (Ahmed and Hart 1982). There are about 250,000 Mahsuds and about 50,000 Wazirs. The Agency also has smaller nomadic groups (Ahmed 1983a). It is about 3,936 sq. miles in area and is the largest and southernmost of the North-West Frontier Province's seven Federally Administered Tribal Areas. A Political Agent heads the administration and represents the government. His power are vast, and the tribes call him 'king of Waziristan' (de Waziristan badshah). South Waziristan shares a border with Afghanistan in the west and Baluchistan, across the Gomal River, in the south. It is distinguished for the most part by desolate valleys and barren mountains.

Recent colonial history is important to Waziristan.[7] Innumerable British soldiers have died here in savage encounters. In the 1930s there were more troops in Waziristan than in the rest of the Indian subcontinent. In 1937 an entire British brigade was wiped out in the Shahur Tangi. The ability of the tribes as fighters is well-recognised: 'the Wazirs and Mahsuds, operating in their own country, can be classed among the finest fighters in the world,' wrote the British Indian Army General Staff (1921:5). To John Masters, who fought in Waziristan, the tribes were 'physically the hardest people on earth' (1965:161). Some famous British Imperial names are associated with Waziristan, such as Curzon, Durand, Kitchener, and T.E. Lawrence (whose note to the South Waziristan Scouts is on display in the Scouts Mess at Wana). Tradition, in name and custom, is preserved. The main western gate

of the army camp at Wana, the summer agency headquarters and main settlement, is still called the Durand Gate, and the main picket is Gibraltar. Bugles still play at sunset as the Pakistani flag is lowered and the entire camp comes to a halt for those few minutes. Farewells to officers are conducted with traditional ritual in the Scouts Mess, with the band (in kilts and bagpipes) providing music. The romantic aspect of the colonial encounter which created a ‘mystification’ in British eyes is perhaps most evocative in Waziristan (Ahmed 1978). Their participation in the ‘Great Game’ between Imperial Russia and Imperial Britain further added to the importance of the Waziristan tribes (Ahmed 1979).

Beginning in the late 1960s, a mullah among the Wazirs mobilised Islam to forge a particular tribal ideology into a political movement against the Mahsuds, accusing the administration of supporting the latter. A migrant from neighbouring Bannu District, he built a beautiful mosque at Wana, unique in the Tribal Areas, and a complex of schools and dormitories around it. With his emergence in the politics of the Agency, the mosque came to symbolise the Mullah and his policies. The Wazir Mullah defined the boundaries within the society. His objectives were explicit: transformation of the social structure and organisation. His method was ambiguous, alternating between a secular political paradigm and a religious-charismatic one. This ambiguity gave him room to manoeuvre and partly explains his social and political success.

However the story begins with the migration of Maulvi Khan to the Agency. An appointment as mullah in their small kacha (mud) mosque was offered to Maulvi Khan, father of Noor Muhammad, by the Mughal Khel, a cousin lineage to the Bizan Khel. Wana was a small settlement at the time. ‘There are only about 120 houses altogether of these tribes living in Wana, where they will be found chiefly at Moghul Khel village just outside the camp’ (Johnson 1934a: 8).

Maulvi soon established his reputation in Wana as a man of piety and devotion. He distributed taweez (a religious talisman) and acted as a desi hakeem (native medicine man). A son, his first, was bom to him in 1931 in his Bizan Khel village in Bannu District, and

named Noor Muhammad (‘light of the Prophet Muhammad’). Shortly after this Maulvi moved his entire family to Wana.

Maulvi Khan sent his son, Noor Muhammad, to Multan in the Punjab for religious schooling at the Dar-ul-uloom as a talib (religious scholar, from Arabic). The school was organised and supervised by Maulana Mufti Mahmood.[8] After completing his education Noor returned to Wana. He inherited his father’s position after his death.

The Mullah distributed taweez to cure the ill and provided council for the grieved. Men and women brought their problems to him for solution. He was soon reputed to possess healing powers. His taweez were symbols of this power. Payments were made to him in gratitude for such favours; dyadic links were cemented with prestations. Economic favours were exchanged for spiritual patronage. The Wazirs had found a spiritual leader they could trust. He was becoming the symbol of reviving Wazir pride and identity. For them he was building an emotionally contagious atmosphere suggesting spiritual powers around his person.

Apart from the religious functions he had assumed, the Mullah imposed a general Wazir peace in the area. Those quarrelling among themselves were fined and punished by the Mullah. His peace patched old cousin enmities, such as the one between Jalat and Bangui. He also began to arbitrate actively between groups in conflict. Clearly he was simultaneously appropriating the roles of the traditional elders in a jirga and the political administration in this regard. Various larger developments in Pakistan helped provide a suitable frame for the Mullah’s emergence and I shall briefly refer to them later.

The late 1960s and early 1970s were characterised by new sources of wealth —internal (Ahmed 1977) and external, such as remittances from employment in the Arab states (Ahmed 1980a, 1981). For the first time, the tribesman with initiative could make considerable money. Some of the Wazirs’ money was diverted to the Mullah; he seemed to be their champion, and he needed funds for his organisation. The Mullah’s religious organisation supported

complex economic networks. He invested some of the money in items that would confer prestige among Pukhtuns: Japanese cars, buses, guns, and lavish feasts for visiting politicians. Recent Waziristan history may be viewed as a function of the Mullah’s emergence and politics.

Two important economic developments in the Agency coincided with the construction of the new mosque at Wana. First, a market (adda) sprang up between the mosque and the main road. In the late 1950s and early 1960s encroachments resulted in a cluster of small mud shops. The Scouts protested, as this violated rules prohibiting civilian construction near their posts and camps. Numerous letters were exchanged and meetings held between the Commandant of the Scouts, the Political Agent, and his superior the Commissioner, but the market continued to grow. Because it was on the property of the Mughal Khel Wazirs, it came to be known as Adda Mughal Khel. Eventually there were 400 shops, each one not more than a small room or two. The market became a thriving centre of commerce for the Agency. The organisation of the mosque and the market were interlinked by their guiding genius, the Mullah. The mosque was popularly called Adda Mughal Khel mosque, that is, the mosque of the Mughal Khel market. Second, a major dam, the Gomal Zam Project, was started by the government in Wazir territory. The Wazirs provided labour and were given building contracts. Both developments generated local money.

A magnificent mosque costing between Rs 7(M).(MX) and 800,000 (about U.S. $ 70,000 — $ 80,000) was soon completed. The minarets and dome were resplendent with tiles and glass of many hues. The interior reflected depth and space. A stream passed through the mosque, and coloured fish were kept in it. No monument so splendid had been seen in that—or any other—agency before. Elders from other agencies came to admire the mosque and compliment its builder. The Mullah basked in this acclaim and concentrated his energy on expanding an organisation around the mosque. He built a madrassah (religious school) adjacent to the mosque and dormitories for visiting talibs (scholars), most of who were sons of Wazir elders. A set of rooms was built for the Mullah on the second floor of the mosque, overlooking its courtyard. As a mark of deference, people now referred to him as ‘Maulvi Sahib’ rather than by his name.

In 1971, after the war with India (which resulted in the break up of East Pakistan), Z.A. Bhutto emerged as the political leader of Pakistan, rallying a dispirited nation. In his political style Bhutto appeared to offer a viable model. The Mullah watched and learned. Both were relatively young leaders with considerable political skill and organisational ability who relied on their charisma and oratory to secure and stir their followers. Both spoke in the language of hyperbole and poetic populism. Their demeanour bordered on arrogance, and they brooked no opposition. Their critics accused them of opportunism. The politics of the 1970s in Pakistan were cast in the mould of Bhutto, and these politics had their impact on Waziristan.

The Mullah, considering that the time was ripe for it, made a bid in the early 1970s for the control of the minds of the Wazirs. He was moving from a religious to a political role. For instance, he forbade the use of radios in the Adda as un-Islamic. Having banned the radio, he listened to it avidly. Selecting information from the radio commentary or news, he would ‘predict’ national events at the Friday congregation in the mosque. His announcement of the National Pay Commission is one such example. The Mullah informed his following that he was praying for an increase in salary for the poorly paid Wazir khassadars (tribal levies) and Scouts (who received about Rs 200 to 250 a month). An increase in the official salaries was being debated in the nation during 1972–73, and an announcement on the matter was imminent. The debate was reported in the mass media. Forbidden from listening to the radio and generally illiterate, the Wazirs were unaware of the national debate. When the government announced an increase in salaries, they took it as an example of the Mullah’s powers to predict and influence events. The khassadars were particularly impressed and committed a monthly contribution of Rs 4 each to the mosque fund.

Shortly afterwards, the Mullah imposed various taxes on almost every aspect of commercial activity at the Adda, ostensibly to support the mosque. Each shop paid a monthly contribution of Rs 10. Smaller charges were imposed on other items, for instance, Rs 2 for a camel-load (usually of wood), Re 0.25 per crate of apples, and Re 0.50 per animal. The khassadars, to display their loyalty, further increased their monthly contribution to Rs 5. Fines brought in more money. A shop owner violating the radio ban could be fined Rs 500 by the Mullah’s armed supporters, the chalweshti, and also beaten up by them. Mir Askar, the Khojal Khel elder who remained

defiant, was regularly fined and manhandled by the chalweshti. Wazir Maliks receiving a timber permit were expected to donate half its market price to the Mullah. Estimates of the income from these sources vary from Rs 20,000–30,000 daily. The Mullah kept half the amount and the other half was divided among the chalweshti (who organised its collection) and his followers. No audit of these sums was conducted nor were the figures made public.

The Mullah had been biding his time before challenging the traditional leaders of Wazir society, the Maliks and the pirs (religious leaders). When he felt reasonably secure he openly scorned them. Traditional and somewhat ineffective leaders (like Malik Pasti, the Mughal Khel elder), or established religious figures (such as the Pir of Wana), were under considerable pressure from the tribe. They held their peace “to save their self-respect’. An occasional bomb blast (like the one at Malik Pasti’s home)[9] or ambush (such as of the Khojal Khel elders) made sure the point of the Mullah’s authority was not lost on recalcitrant elders.

Political administration read the Mullah’s attack on their traditional allies, the Maliks, as a prelude to his challenging established authority.

<quote>

His first target was the institution of Maliki. He started condemning the Maliks openly and at times he abused them on the pulpit. The idea was to weaken the institutional arrangements so that he could bulldoze his way by shattering all the norms and forms of administration. The Maliks started feeling uneasy but owing to his deepening influence on the tribe they found themselves absolutely helpless. They had no other option but to join his umbrella where they felt they could shelter themselves against the wrath of the teeman (populace—common people) who would go into a state of frenzy at the slightest provocation by Maulvi (Political Agent’s Office 1977:4).

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Dismissing traditional leaders as ‘Government toadies’ who only worked for their own selfish interests, he built up an alternative leadership. Around himself he gathered the dolas kassi (twelve men), mainly from Zilli Khel, which assumed the status of his cabinet and conducted affairs on his behalf. The cabinet included emergent and eloquent kashar like Ba Khan (Zilli Khel). The chalweshti was streamlined to ensure immediate implementation of his decisions. Those who opposed his wishes were incarcerated for short periods in a jail organised for this purpose. Many traditional Zilli Khel elders, like Jalat, supported him wholeheartedly as they saw in him a viable form and focus of opposition to traditional opponents such as the Mahsud. The Mullah, in bypassing traditional leadership and exposing it as impotent and corrupt, had created a powerful base in the teeman. The teeman, which included women and children, showed their confidence in him through expressions of personal loyalty. Traditional leaders had been out-flanked by the Mullah’s approach to the Wazir. The Mullah had become the very embodiment of Wazir aspirations.

Three economic issues formed the main platform of the Mullah—first, he emphasised the Wazir nature of the market at Wana; second, he challenged Mahsud rights to the timber funds from Wazir forests that were distributed among the agency’s tribes in the form of timber permits; third, he demanded an alternative route for the Wazirs, bypassing the Mahsud area, to the Settled Districts along the Gomal River. Each demand had clear social and political implications. The Mullah would not lead the Wazirs to the promised land but bring the promised land to the Wazirs.

At the same time, the Mullah imitated and developed some of the formalistic aspects of bureaucracy associated with the Political Agent. Armed guards escorted him wherever he went; mulaqats (meetings) with him were arranged by formal, often written, requests through his supporters. He issued chits to his followers ordering admission to official schools or medical dispensaries; he wrote asking officials to give interviews ‘to the bearer of this note’. His requests were honoured and his whims humoured. These were visible symbols of his growing importance in and to the society. By appropriating some of the form and content of the Political Agent’s function, he was setting himself on a collision course with that office.

From being a traditional Mullah serving the tribe, he had now emerged as a leader representing, and speaking for, the tribe. The transformation from a sub- to a super-ordinate position in society was as visible as portentous; however, the passage from one category to the other was smooth and not marked by any dramatic event. The Mullah was impressed and somewhat awed by his own growing popularity: ‘there was such a multitude of people which reminded people who had performed haj of Arafa [where the Holy Prophet preached]’ (Noor Muhammad: 21–22). He perceived a sense of destiny pervading his actions. Addressing himself, he noted: ‘God Almighty has given you status and influence matched by few men in history’ (ibid.). He referred to himself in the third person, traditionally used by Muslim royalty. Indeed, the theme of royalty was not far from his mind: ‘When they insisted you address the gathering they introduced you as the uncrowned king [badshah] of Wana’ (ibid.). The title was underlined thrice by the Mullah. As we noted, there was another claimant to the title in the Agency and it is a notorious principle of history that no realm can support two kings.

The Mullah’s campaign to discomfit the Political Agent and thereby ensure his transfer also continued unabated. A course of action was charted out by the Mullah which was repeated at Wazir jirgas:

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no one should see the Political Agent. However the Ahmedzai Wazir may keep their relations good with the APA Wana. If the Government is not going to transfer the present Political Agent, then the Ahmedzai have no objection to it but no Ahmedzai will see him. Defaulters will be liable to pay penalty of Rs 20,000. Maulvi urged for allowing vehicle traffic on Gomal Road. He added that the Political Agent is trying to make friction among the Ahmedzais but they should remain alert and may not disturb their unity (Situation Intelligence Report of Wana Tehsil,20 May 1973).

</quote>

Acts symbolising humiliation of the administration now became commonplace in Wana. A dog was placed on a cot which was carried by a large procession. The dog, representing the Political Agent, was then given a sound thrashing. This symbolic representation of relations between the administration and the Wazirs was to be repeated in the next months.

Those who still saw the Political Agent were punished: ‘After the speech of Mullah Noor Muhammad, Khudaimir Matak Khel, (member of dolas kassi) announced that Malik Hakim is fined for seeing the Political Agent, South Waziristan, some days back. The amount of fine is not known and will be told to them after three days’. Situation Intelligence Report of Wana Tehsil, 20 May 1973.

The Political Agent, faced with the multi-dimensional aspects of the growing Wazir-Mahsud problem in early 1973, decided on firm action by taking two steps. First, he abolished the Timber Committee which dealt with the disposal of the Agency timber and permits for timber. The timber permits were now sold from his office. In the context of the hysteria being built up in the Agency, the action did not please or suit either the Mahsuds or the Wazirs. Although the Wazirs continued to buy permits and re-sell them at an inflated price they resented the dissolution of the Committee. The Mahsuds insisted the permits be sold in the open market and not at fixed prices.

Second, he ordered the arrest of the Mullah’s cabinet, the dolas kassi and chalweshti. The Adda would be blown up if they refused to surrender. Blowing up the Adda would cost the Wazirs a loss of millions of rupees. The shops did a thriving business and were full of goods. Besides, most owners kept safes on the premises with their money locked in them. The order was kept secret until it could be implemented the following day. As the Political Agent’s relations with the Commandant of the Scouts were strained (a fact advertised and exploited by the Mullah), the action was ordered when the Commandant was away from the Agency. Unfortunately for the Political Agent, the Commandant arrived in Wana late at night and, it was widely rumoured, upon learning of the plans passed on the information to the Mullah (Noor Muhammad: 102). The Mullah immediately called an emergency meeting of his key men. He observed that in the past ‘whenever the Scouts came to arrest our people they ran and hid

in fields and mountains’ (ibid.). Tomorrow, he commanded, ‘no one will offer themselves for arrest and if necessary they will fight’, (ibid.)

At the crack of dawn heavy guns were placed around the Adda which was surrounded by the Scouts. The APA, Wana, leading the official party demanded that the dolas kassi and chalweshti come forth and hand themselves over to him. The Mullah’s men were prepared. The chalweshti Commander, designated jernail (from general) by the Mullah, returned the message that ‘he was not General Niazi [the commander of the Pakistan Army in East Pakistan who surrendered to the Indians in December 1971] and would not surrender alive’ (Noor Muhammad: 103). The APA issued written orders on the spot for the Adda to be blown up. These orders were countermanded by the Commandant. Confusion and a sense of anti-climax prevailed in Wana. A stalemate had developed and by the end of the long, cold day it was apparent that the Mullah had won a major moral and political victory for the Wazirs: ‘The 22nd of February, 1973,’ he observed in his note book, ‘has added a new chapter to the history of the Ahmedzai Wazirs’ (ibid. :102). He exulted that ‘Two to three Wazirs faced each Scout’s sepoy and all night the sepoys shivered in the rain and cold’ (ibid.: 103). The Mullah had publicly defied and humiliated the political authorities and got away with it.

Shortly after, the Political Agent made another attempt to curb the Mullah’s influence by arresting some of his Wazir supporters. The Mullah convened an emergency jirga at Wana. He ordered that ‘all Wazir Maliks and leaders present themselves at Adda Mughal Khel in three days and anybody absent will be severely dealth with’ (Noor Muhammad: 106). The administration was warned to release his men before the jirga or face dire consequences (ibid.). On the third day the atmosphere in Wana was highly charged as some 2,000 armed Wazirs gathered to await the Mullah’s orders when into this rally drove the Commandant. He had brought the Mullah’s men with him. They had been unconditionally released by the Political Agent. ‘I expect he will not go awry again and repent his wrong actions’ (ibid.) commented the Mullah about the Political Agent.

Matters in the Agency deteriorated and the next two years saw scattered and persistent confrontation between the adversaries. The Political Agent saw the Mullah at the centre of the problems. The Mullah countered by adopting several lines of action. His most effective strategy was the articulation of his sermons in the mosque where he declared jihad against the Mahsuds. Having raised Wazir emotions to a high pitch he condemned the Mahsuds as kafir. The Mahsuds had dominated and exploited the Wazirs against the spirit of Islam, he argued. They were no better than the Hindus. The time had arrived to rid themselves of the Mahsuds. The imminent jihad would be between good and evil, between Muslim and Hindu. God was on the Wazir side. If, he declared in his fiery sermons, a Wazir killed a Mahsud it would be the equivalent of killing a Hindu kafir. If, on the other hand, a Wazir was killed by a Mahsud, he would become a shaheed and win paradise as he had been killed by a kafir. The Wazirs were inflamed by his rhetoric. By deploying religious arguments in a fundamentally tribal conflict the Mullah was bringing about an internal fusion in society between the spiritual and the social.

Simultaneously, the Mullah opened the issue of an alternative route for the Wazirs, hitherto closed, from Wana along the Gomal river to the Settled Districts. The significance of the Gomal road lay in the fact that it bypassed the Mahsud area unlike the main Agency road from Wana to Jandola. The problem of the Gomal route is a Pandora’s box. The conception of a separate road is tied with that of a separate Agency. A separate Agency would deprive the Mahsuds of the emire timber funds. It would also reduce the importance and size of the Agency. Above all, for the Mahsuds, it would allow their agnatic rivals to escape from the Agency arena and establish their own identity.

The Mahsuds, unable to dismiss the Mullah as an ‘unbeliever,’ stepped up their attack on his character (debauch, homosexual, practiser of black magic, etc.), which indirectly reflected on Wazir morality. The Mahsuds impugned the Mullah’s Pukhtunness’ and accused the Wazir of being without shame; of deviating from Pukhtunwali. Mystification of Pukhtunness was a strategy employed by the Mahsuds to counter the accusation oi being

kafir b\ the Mullah. An ethnic counter-attack was made for a religious attack. Feelings on both sides ran high. The battle hysteria divided the Wazirs and the Mahsuds sharply and the two camps began to prepare for armed confrontation.

The Mullah opened a new front in late 1975. He ordered the main Agency road to be blocked. In December, a Wazir war party (lashkar) gathered at Dargai in the Maddi Jan area for this purpose. Traffic was totally suspended, and the Agency was cut off from the outside world. The Prime Minister of Pakistan ordered that the road be reopened. The Political Agent, accompanied by a strong Scout force, moved from Jandola towards Wana to reopen the road, and simultaneously tanks were moved into the Agency from the Settled Districts. Any movement by the Wazirs, on foot or in vehicles, was banned. A fierce and bloody encounter took place at Maddi Jan in which five soldiers were killed and many more wounded. It was estimated that thirty Wazirs were killed or wounded. Other clashes causing loss of life also took place on the same day. The Wazirs remained defiant, and a few days later they blocked the Agency road again. It appeared that the sequence of events would be repeated. Orders were issued from Islamabad to reopen the road ‘at all costs’. The Scouts moved in considerable strength from Jandola, but this time they faced no opposition; the Wazirs had melted into the night, and the road was deserted.

An abortive attempt to involve the Wazirs from outside the Agency was made. The involvement of Wazirs from the North Waziristan Agency or Afghanistan would have extended the theatre of conflict beyond the Agency borders and created serious complications for the government. Already Kabul was watching developments in Waziristan with interest; ideal material was at hand for its claim that Pukhtuns in the North-West Frontier Province wanted to secede.

The Mullah now ordered general civil disobedience. The Wazirs blocked the main roads, shot at the Scouts, and, at the climax of the movement, imposed a physical boycott on the Wana camp. Major clashes between the Wazirs, the Mahsuds, and the administration took place involving the death of many tribesmen and soldiers. The Agency was in flames; on the Durand Line such a situation has international ramifications. After obtaining clearance from the

highest authority in the land, the administration acted in May 1976. Armed tanks were moved into the Agency, and the Air Force was alerted. The Scouts destroyed the Wana markets of the Wazirs and arrested the Mullah's 'cabinet' and, eventually, the Mullah himself. He and his key men were tried, found guilty and sent to jail in Hazara, across the Indus. The action, possibly the most serious of its kind in the history of the Tribal Areas, became the centre of controversy. The Wazirs were left in disarray, the Mahsuds jubilant, and the administration self-righteous. Afghan propaganda described the conflict as a simple Pukhtun struggle for autonomy against a Punjabi-dominated central government. Indeed, not since the merger of the Frontier States (Swat, Chitral, Dir, and Amb) in 1969 had such a live issue presented itself to Kabul. Kabul's propaganda underlined the ethnic nature of the Mullah's struggle and pointed out that some of the key men in the drama (the Central Interior Minister, the Chief Secretary of the Province, and the Political Agent) were non-Pukhtuns and hence, they argued, unsympathetic to the Pukhtuns.

Why did the Wazirs respond to the Mullah? Was it clan or lineage pride—what may be termed 'primordial ethnicity'—based on the memory of humiliation at the hands of the Mahsuds? Was it promises of economic betterment? (Certainly some of the central issues were economic in nature.) Was it the hope of a separate Agency, with all its political and social implications? Or the Mullah's wealth, with which he could patronise the elders and the poor? Or the Papa Doc Duvalier syndrome—irrational fear of the evil eye and the immediate fear of thugs who could rough up doubters or close their shops. The Wazirs thought they were using the Mullah to say and do things that they could not do themselves. In the end, did the Wazirs use the Mullah, or did he use them? (The answer may be both.) Considering the intensely democratic and egalitarian nature of ideal Pukhtun society, is the Mullah's emergence and success in peacetime an aberration? What are the social factors that caused it? All these questions are important for the study of leadership, social structure, and organisation among Pukhtun tribesmen.

The break down of the ideal model implies the creation of tension in society on three levels: (a) social—women visiting the Mullah with various personal requests provided the enemies of the Wazirs grounds to talk about deviant Pukhtun behaviour and the hint of immorality; (b) political—the Mullah led a challenge to the established

authority of the State which assumed the form of a rebellion; and (c) religious—the Mahsuds were condemned as kafirs and a jihad declared against them. Since tension is implicit in the Mullah's work, to accept him posed as many dilemmas for the Wazirs as to reject him. This raises fundamental questions about human behaviour.

The study also raises important issues with wider theoretical ramifications such as the role of Islam in society, the emergence of religious leaders like the Mullah, the nature of the concept of jihad, and the necessity to construct an Islamic district paradigm. Islam is a religion preaching unity and equality among its followers, and the mullahs traditionally uphold Islamic ideology among the tribes. The Wazir Mullah both divided the Muslims and created a highly centralised organisation around himself with a well-defined hierarchy.

The neglect of the role of the administrative structure in studies of tribal societies has recently been criticised (Asad 1973). I have illustrated how administrative interaction can affect tribal policy and strategy. Indeed, the administration may be viewed here as the third 'tribe' of the Agency, with its own boundaries, sets of symbols, and ritualised behaviour. Formal interaction with the other two tribes is characterised by ritual. The third has its own esoteric written and spoken language which is not understood by the other tribes—English. The Political Agent may be seen as the 'chief of the tribe and the South Waziristan Scouts as its 'warriors'.

The 'personalities' of the main actors—the Mullah, the Political Agent and the Colonel—are important governing factors in the drama. Perhaps we need to re-examine the idea of personality in the social sciences. Why do we oppose 'personal' factors to 'structural' and 'categorical' ones? If persona are the loci through which opposed forces flow, then the person is also one of those forces.

To the Wazirs, the Mullah seemed a rational and sympathetic religious leader determined to secure their honour and rights. To his followers the blatant tilting of the administration towards the Mahsuds, the arrest of the Mullah, and the 'capture' of the mosque were tantamount to heresy. They argue that

the house of God was desecrated and his faithful servant, the Mullah, arrested. Their continuing boycott of the mosque is explained as an Islamic response to a captured house of worship. Religion is not merely metaphysics. For ail people the forms, vehicles, and objects of worship are suffused with an aura of deep moral seriousness. Religion carries with it a sense of intrinsic social obligation; it not only induces intellectual conformity, but demands emotional commitment. The Mullah's jihad had this effect, and the commitment is still explicitly expressed in the society.

The Mullah relied largely on his charisma—his powerful rhetoric, personality, and organisational skills--10 win the hearts of his followers. Above all, he gave them group pride and identity. He was palpably neither qazi, saint or sufi with a reputation derived from lifelong abstinence, meditation or scholarship (Keddie 1972). None of this mattered to the Wazirs. A Pukhto proverb sums up the relationship of followers to their pir (saint): Though the pir himself does not fly. his disciples would have him fly' (Ahmed 1973:19). The Wazirs saw their pir in miraculous flight. They entertained high hopes, partly because of their need for a saviour to deliver them from their enemies. The ground was thus fertile for the emergence of a leader who could organise cultural and religious forces on behalf of his followers. 'Now, it is at such—when a genuine sense of injustice, or danger, etc., reaches a certain point—that a closed complex opens up to the transcendent religious' (Rahman, personal communication).

In certain actions, however (for instance, in encouraging their children and women to pay the Mullah homage), the Wazirs violated a cardinal principle of Pukhtunwali and left themselves open to charges of shamelessness. It became fashionable to ask Wazirs, 'Are you first Muslims (implying the laws of Islam) or Wazirs (implying those of the Mullah)?' Either way, the answer posed dilemmas for the Wazirs. It also put their loyalty to the Mullah to a severe test. To answer 'Muslim' would negate Wazir 'primordial ethnicity' and its manifestations in the society, the movement and the Mullah. Such jibes, common among the administration and the Mahsuds, further embittered the Wazirs and reinforced loyalty to their leader.

Islamic religious groups providing leadership in society may be broadly divided into three overlapping categories. The first two are defined by their

functions, the third bv genealogical links with holy ancestors. The first, the ulema.[10] defined by religious and legal learning, includes the mufti, qazi. maulana, and maulvi; the second, defined by esoteric, sometimes unorthodox, practice, includes groups such as the sufis; and the third, defined by genealogy and thus claiming superior social status, consists of the sharifs or sayyids (descended from the Prophet) and the mians (descended from holy men), rhe ulema represent the orthodox, bureaucratic, formal and legalistic traditions in Islam. They interact with the state even at the highest level and advise the kings, captains, and commanders of Islam. In contrast, the mystical orders largely restrict themselves to the rural areas, shunning worldly pursuits and avoiding formal interaction with the administration. They command the hearts as well as the minds of their followers. The holy lineages and their members command a vague and generalised respect, especially if they live up to the behavioural ideal, which is pacific, dignified, and neutral with regard to warring groups. What is of interest here is the difficulty in placing the mullah in any one category easily.

The difficulty is not simply taxonomic, but related to the ambiguity and elasticity of his social role. Not quite the learned mufti (sure of his orthodox Islamic knowledge), or the sufi (sure of his Islamic faith), the mullah is forced to define and create his own role. He may, indeed, borrow from all three categories, elevating himself to maulvi in one place (as in this case) and mian in others (Ahmed 1980a: 167). In general, the mullah occupies a junior position in the religious hierarchy and is defined as ‘a lesser member of the religious classes’ (Algar 1969: 264). Except in extraordinary circumstances the mullah restricts himself largely to the village level of social and political life. He appears to thrive in crises. Although the mullah’s role is one of the most interesting and important in village and rural society, it is also one of the least studied. The serious writing of the ulema and the imaginative practices of the sufis appear to attract the most scholarship.

The Mullah of Waziristan was a Wazir, that is, a Pukhtun, from Bannu. He was not a sayyid or a mian. The distinction is important in the Pukhtun universe. The claims to superiority of the sayyid and the mian are backed by marriage rules and idealised behaviour patterns. Pukhtuns, notoriously endogamous and reluctant to give their women to non-Pukhtuns, are prepared to waive their prejudice for the sayyids (Ahmed 1980a, Barth 1972). They are settled between Pukhtun clans, a placement which is symbolic of their role as

mediators between warring groups. The mullah is more often than not a poor Pukhtun of a junior or depressed lineage. The translation of the role from religious to political spokesman within the society was thus inevitable once the Mullah had attracted a following. No lineage structure constrained him; as the son of a migrant member of a junior lineage, he remained outside the local lineage charter yet part of the larger Wazir tribe. From a mullah supervising religious functions he became a leader promising specific political goals.

The religious groups just described provide idealised models of moral behaviour. The story of the Mullah of Waziristan is not to be interpreted as an indictment of this class; it is, rather, the saga of one man and his struggle. His opponents perhaps exaggerated what they saw as his moral turpitude in order to contrast it with the behaviour expected of those belonging to religious groups. The question thus arises of relating the concept and role of mullah to a larger framework. Among Pukhtuns the mullah remains subordinate to the lineage elders and usually does not feature in the genealogical charter (Ahmed 1980a). As I have shown (ibid.), Pukhtun elders saw political activity as their preserve and restricted the role of the mian or mullah to religious functions. The important function of the mullah is to organise and supervise rites of passage based on Islamic tradition. Among Pukhtuns there is little evidence of the oscillation between two forms of society suggested in the ‘pendulum-swing theory’ (Gellner 1969b). Social leadership is firmly lodged in the lineage charter (Ahmed 1980a). In any case, the mullah in a Muslim society has no proselytising function. He must explore other areas if he is to enhance his role and authority in society.

A mullah may rise to power in extraordinary times, rallying Muslims against invading non-Muslims (Ahmed 1976). In the Tribal Areas, mullahs have led widespread revolts against the British with singular courage and conviction (for example, in 1897). Their bold stand provides a contrast to those quiescent elements in society that preferred to sit on the fence in the struggle against the British (traditional leaders and bureaucrats, in terms of the district paradigm). Men such as Adda Mullah, Manki Mullah, Palam Mullah, Mastan Mullah, and, in Waziristan, Mullah Powindah and the Fakir of Ipi seemed to appear from nowhere to mobilise society and lead the struggle. Some, like Mastan Mullah of Buner in Swat, known as sartor

baba,[11] claimed, or were believed to possess, magical powers in their fight for Islam. The struggle, to the mullah, was a jihad, to be conducted irrespective of success.

The role of the mullah is negligible when the invading army is Muslim; a jihad cannot be invoked against Muslim brothers in the faith. When the Pukhtun tribes fought the Mughal armies, representing a Muslim dynasty, they were led by traditional tribal leaders. The Mullah of Waziristan provides an interesting example of a mullah who mobilised an entire tribe by creating a religious battle hysteria against kin groups belonging to the same sect and local administrative unit in peacetime. The Waziristan case may be interpreted as a mullah's rejection of his traditional role, a rejection that created problems for the society at the same time as it afforded possibilities for the mullah.

This discussion of mullahs raises the related issue of the definition and role of saints and holy men in Islamic society. I have argued elsewhere (Ahmed 1976) that it is misleading to use the gloss 'saint' for mullah as some anthropologists have done (Bailey 1972, Barth 1972). Mullahs aspiring to spiritual status through mumbo-jumbo, such as the Wazir Mullah and Barth's Nalkot Pacha of Swat, usually employ transparent tricks and devices to convince people of their special powers. The sayyid or mian, assured of his position, does not need to do this. The Wazir Mullah installed a wide-angle viewer (sent by a follower from the Arab Gulf states) in his door. He could thus 'foresee' and predict who his visitor was, what he looked like, or what he was wearing. His capacity to see through doors was taken as further evidence of his powers. The Wazirs believed he possessed 'the magic eye' (de jado starga). Even educated people believed that the viewer was a magical device. Nalkot, whom I visited in 1976, described to me the devices he employed. His favourite was to stitch a thin piece of wire under the skin of his stomach and then, in front of a selected gathering, to 'eat' another bit of wire; as the audience watched in amazement, he would slowly pull out the first wire. 'Am I to blame,' he asked, 'if people are so simple and believe everything?' Not only did people believe in his powers, but some elevated him to the role of 'saint,' and in anthropological literature it is this characterisation that prevails (for further discussion, see Ahmed forthcoming). Similar stories are told about the Mullah Powindah, the earlier and better-known religious leader of Waziristan. This mullah's grandnephew

Ahmedo Jan, one of the leading elders of the Agency, told of various devices his ancestor had employed to illustrate his powers. A favourite was to predict that the niswar (snuff) his followers were addicted to would turn to faeces if they did not give it up. At night his selected companions would place dog faeces in the niswar containers, and on rising in the morning his followers would marvel at the mullah’s powers. Such tricks win some following that can be manipulated to consolidate the mullah’s leadership.

Anthropology must be hermeneutic; it can only be so if the anthropologist manages to ‘get inside’ the local culture to some extent. On the basis of subjective criteria, we may understand what made the Wazirs respond to the call for a jihad. For the orthodox Muslim, the crime of Akbar the Mughal, the most famous case of Imperial heresy in South Asian Islam, lay in his attempt to redefine Islam; for the majority of Muslims in the Agency, the crime of the Mullah lay in his redefinition of the jihad.[12] Scholars of Islam have held different opinions on the exact nature of the jihad, a discussion that dates to the time of the Prophet. However, its importance for the believer is not in doubt. The Quran is explicit about the central role of the jihad.

<quote>

Fight in the way of Allah against those who fight against you, hut begin not hostilities.

Lo! Allah loveth not aggressors. (Surah IL al-haqarah. verse 190.)

</quote>

Verse 191 of the same surah actually employs the term Kafir with reference to the preceding verse. The jihad is an all-encompassing struggle, a total commitment. Muslims are exhorted:

<quote>

Go forth and strive with your wealth and your lives in the way of Allah! (Surah IX. verse 47.)

</quote>

Sufis quote the Prophet as distinguishing two forms of iihad’ the lesser jihad or holy war and the greater jihad, or the struggle against one’s own passions. The importance of the moral life is thus emphasised (Hodgson 1974:228). Modern sufi scholars, too, emphasise ‘personal striving’ in defining jihad (Algar 1969:263), as do contemporary Islamic scholars: one must also admit that the means of jihad can vary—in fact, armed jihad is only one form’ (Rahman 1980:63). The jihad, then, is ‘systematic endeavour’ against fitna and fasad (oppression and injustice) (Maududi 1948) to ‘establish the Islamic socio-moral order’ (Rahman 1979:37). Recent Western scholarship discusses the jihad mainly as an instrument against the European colonial venture (Dale 1981, Peters 1979).

For our purposes, jihad may be defined as a holy struggle in the way of Allah. There is thus no theological support for a jihad against fellow Muslims. However, the jihad becomes operative when takfir (declaring someone an unbeliever or a non-Muslim) is involved. The Quran and the Prophet define a Muslim as a person reciting the kalima (the declaration of faith in the uniqueness of God and the prophethood of Muhammad). The Mahsuds fitted neither the unbeliever nor the heretic category. To condemn them as kafirs was, in itself, an act of considerable audacity. The Mullah’s jihad clearly rested on a weak theological but a strong sociological base.

Was the Wazir movement an outright rebellion, a struggle for political rights, or an attempt at transforming the social structure or defining ethnic boundaries? A common answer suggests itself for these questions—it was all of these things to different men at different times. The ambiguity of the answer and what it meant for the Wazirs reflects the range of interpretations

open before us. The ambiguity is compounded by the ambiguity surrounding the Mullah himself.

If a certain ambiguity exists in the perception of the terms under discussion by insiders, a similar set of problems faces outsiders who comment on Muslim society. Herein, perhaps, lies the challenge of studying society. I he richness and diversity of the subject are brought out clearly in the work of the iv o outstanding scholars of tribal Islam, Geertz (1968. 1973; Geertz. Geertz, and Rosen 1979) and Gellner (1969a, b; Gellner and Micaud 1973) Indeed, the opposed models they build to explain social structure and organisation—the former emphasising culture, the latter segmentary' structure—point to the methodological fecundity of the discipline. Alternatively. Muslim anthropologists have suggested the need for an anthropology of Islam' (el-Zein 1977). Will this 'anthropology' be another name for 'the sociology of Islam,' the social and sociological interpretation of basic religious themes by Muslim social scientists (Shariati 1979)? Is the endeavour to be defined by religious rather than academic schools? Surely, this would subtract from rather than add to the understanding of human groups.

A question that arises from the above discussion is: How Islamic are these tribes? In a sociological and cultural sense they may be defined as Islamic. A tribesman equates his Pukhtun lineage with Islam; to him the two are inextricably bound together. Concepts such as jihad are therefore potent and meaningful to him. Although he is aware of certain deviations from Islamic theological tradition, especially regarding women's rights, he is never in doubt about his Musiimness. I have criticised Barth (1972) for omitting the framework of Islam and its symbols from the analysis of Muslim tribal society (Ahmed 1976).[13] This tradition in anthropology derives in the main from the study of non-lslamic African tribes (Fortes and Evans-Pritchard 1970, Gluckman 1971, Middleton and Tait 1970). The question of relating religious to tribal identity has engaged anthropologists studying tribal groups, both Pukhtun (Anderson 1980; Beattie 1980; Canfield 1980; Ghani 1978. forthcoming; Tavakolian 1980) and others (Geertz 1968; Geertz. Geertz. and Rosen 1979; Gellner 1969a, b; Vatin 1980). The exercise in itself serves little purpose, and the debate generated may be misleading. We may more usefully pose the problem as the tribesman himself views it. To the tribesman Islam provides the political and socioreligious formations

within which his Pukhtunness operates. The two are in harmony, and he sees them as a logical construct. They are closely interrelated; to suggest a dichotomy is false. Rather, the understanding of religion as being outside structure is to be viewed as a European one. The differentiation of religion and political systems into discrete categories is orthodox methodology in Western thought.

A recognition of the overlapping of Islam and Pukhtunness partly explains the success of the Mullah. Once Islam was equated with kinship and the Islamic idiom employed, his success in leading and consolidating the Wazirs was ensured. The instruments for maintaining and reinforcing the Wazir ethnic boundary were drawn from an Islamic frame; the mosque was the base of the Mullah’s operations and the key symbol of Wazir identity.

The dichotomy separating Islam and Pukhtunness is palpably sterile. Whether embarking on a religious war or stealing cattle, the Pukhtun invokes his God.[14] His objectives may be at fault, but not his sincerity and correctness in invoking assistance from heaven. Rephrasing from ‘Islam versus Pukhtunness’ to ‘Islam and Pukhtunness,’ bringing Pukhtun custom and tradition into accordance with Islamic tradition, may be a more useful way of approaching the problem. The discussion could be still more fruitful if it analysed the use of Islam by religious leaders (such as the Mullah) to consolidate their position, especially in changing times. Thus the discussion shifts from the ideological base of the tribesman to questions of strategy and the choices open to him.

Anthropological studies of Muslim society may be broadly divided into village and tribal studies. The village, in the main, whether Turkish, Egyptian, or Pakistani, shares many of the characteristics of villages in other parts of the world; it is a peasant and rustic, largely self-sufficient universe somewhat isolated from larger developments and defined by village boundaries. It is in the study of Islamic tribal societies (a small percentage of the population in comparison with peasant groups) that anthoropology has made important and original contributions. Here, too, however, there is a methodological bias in conceptualising the universe in blocs sometimes so large as to cross national borders. While I am in partial agreement with the idea of conceptualising the Sanusi, the Tijaniya, the Berbers and the Bedouin as

wholes for purposes of analysis, I object to the application of this approach in to to when interpreting empirically observed reality, which may not conform to holistic theory. Although a Wazir conceptualises himself as part of a large tribal configuration, a universe which includes his lineage kin in North Waziristan Agency and across the border in Afghanistan, his empirical restriction to the Agency is underlined in times of need. In spite of appeals for assistance, no kin arrived to participate in the struggle against the Mahsuds. The boundaries of the Wazir ethnic universe in fact tended to coincide with the administrative boundaries of the Agency.

On the surface and for purposes of general analysis, I have assumed a two-bloc Pukhtun political system corresponding to the Wazir and Mahsud tribes. Segmentary and political boundaries have been conceptualised as coinciding and thus upholding the segmentary principle of organisation. In fact, there are smaller blocs within the major ones that may cross, tribal boundaries to seek alliances. For instance, the second bloc among the Mahsuds, opposing the major one, supported the Wazirs in larger issues. Among the Wazirs the smaller clans opposed the major Zilli Khel clan and were usually sympathetic to the administration.

When conceptualising the tribe as a political unit in holistic arguments it will be well to keep in mind that the present administrative boundaries do not always correspond with tribal boundaries. Districts and agencies— indeed, along with the international Durand Line—were created at the turn of the century by the British, often without regard for tribal boundaries. Major tribes (such as the Mohmands or the Wazirs) were divided by the international border; others were untidily distributed between district and agency (the Afridis, for example, are in Kohat District and Khyber Agency). The Ahmedzai Wazirs were separated from their Utmanzai Wazir cousins (who were confined to North Waziristan Agency), and placed with their traditional rivals, the Mahsuds, in South Waziristan Agency. Like other tribes in the region, the Ahmedzai Wazirs have confronted the fact of British-created borders for three generations. On either side of the Durand Line, differing political, educational, and economic factors have widened the gap between Wazir and Wazir. New political realities have forced the creation of new social boundaries that take precedence over traditional alignments. We may thus conceptualise the Wazir tribe as a unit but must keep in mind administrative

realities on the ground. An understanding of the Islamic district paradigm is important in illuminating some of the problems thus created.

The graphic depiction of the argument (Figures 1 and 2 and Map 1) allows it to be clearly visualised. Figure 1 depicts, in encapsulated form, the Wazir-Mahsud genealogy. Ideally, the segmentary theory suggests that the Ahmedzais would be assisted by their Wazir kin when in conflict with the Mahsuds. The Mahsud clans, in turn, would unite against the Ahmedzais (the unity of the Dre Mahsud, the three Mahsud clans, remained unshaken by internal politics and was a formidable factor in defeating the Wazirs).

[[i-a-islam-and-the-district-paradigm-plus-responses-1.jpg][Figure 1 Wazir-Mahsud Lineage]]

Map 1 reminds us that while the Wazirs live in Afghanistan and North Waziristan Agency, the Mahsuds are confined to South Waziristan Agency. Not only are the Utmanzai Wazirs separated by administrative boundaries from their Ahmedzai cousins, but the Ahmedzais themselves are divided by the international boundary.

If Map 1 is superimposed on Figure 1, the importance of administrative boundaries in affecting tribal life will be made clear.

The Wazirs find themselves restricted by the Agency borders. The inability of their kin to come to the assistance of the Ahmedzais of South Waziristan Agency in times of crisis was clearly brought out in the extended case-study discussed earlier. (The boundaries work both ways: Wazirs who wish to escape the Agency administration may cross the international border to their kin.) We may conclude that for historical and administrative reasons it would be more meaningful to analyse tribal groups within their contemporary political situations, or with specific reference to the Islamic district paradigm.

The notion of segmentation in tribal structure is one of the major contributions of anthropology to Islamic tribal studies. Can the data of the

Waziristan case study be interpreted as traditional segmentary politics in the classic mould? The first important elaboration of the segmentation theory was Evans-Pritchard’s Nuer study. The theory became, and remains, popular in examining Islamic tribal groups. Studies of the Berbers of the Atlas by Ernest Gellner and the Somali nomads by I.M. Lewis are highly regarded examples, and Evans-Pritchard himself applied the theory to the Cyrenaican Bedouin. In a sense, the segmentation theory has thus returned to its natural place of origin, in the segmentary genealogical charters of Islamic tribal groups, whence it originated a century earlier in the writings of Victorian scholar-travellers such as W. Robertson Smith. Recently there has been considerable and mounting criticism of the segmentation theory, particularly in America. The criticism is led by Clifford and Hildred Geertz and younger American anthropologists such as Dale Eickelman and Larry Rosen (is the lineup itself suggestive of tribal divisions between British and American ‘cousins’?). The following, in capsule form, are some of the major criticisms: segments are neither balanced nor equal; on the contrary, there is disparity in political resources, and this is exacerbated with the emergence of lineages claiming seniority. Further, in times of political crisis, groups do not combine according to segmentary patterns. In spite of these criticisms satisfactory alternative explanations have not been put forward.

[[i-a-islam-and-the-district-paradigm-plus-responses-3.jpg][Map 1 The Agency]]

[[i-a-islam-and-the-district-paradigm-plus-responses-2.jpg][**Figure 2 Wazir-Mahsud Lineage and the Agency**]]

This study has illustrated the usefulness of the segmentation theory if the criticism is kept in mind. The degree of segmentation and segmentary consciousness are high in Waziristan society and are so locally perceived. Political action is articulated on the basis of the relationships defined in and by the genealogical charter. The agnatic rivalry between the Wazirs and the Mahsuds may be interpreted as a fundamental articulation of segmentary opposition. Mahsud inheritance of poorer lands, which presupposes junior lineages in the tribal charter, reinforced solidarity and sharpened strategy. Indeed, it may be stated that the genesis of the Waziristan problem is lodged in the genealogical charter; to understand the

charter is to unravel the mysteries surrounding the problem. We may conclude that the segmentation theory retains its usefulness for examining Islamic tribal groups with the caveat that it must be conceptualised as a blueprint for social identity and not for political action.

I have touched upon the dangers of applying the segmentation theory too literally. Surely examples, such as the inability of Wazirs outside the Agency to assist Agency Wazirs against the Mahsuds, expose its weaknesses. Other variables (that may be termed ‘cultural’) are important in understanding Wazir social life. Culture is broadly defined here as customs consisting of the three interacting variables of word, deed, and concept. The response of the Wazirs to the Mullah was partly psychological and partly religious (what Parkin [1978] has termed ‘the dynamics of cultural autonomy’). The local response among the Wazirs crystallised into what I have called primordial ethnicity. This was partly the creation of the Mullah. He was simultaneously cause and effect of the phenomenon. Traditional segmentary alignments were reordered by the Mullah’s politics. The classic articulation and expression of segmentary lineage politics was thus altered. The usefulness of the segmentation theory is clearly reduced in situations of social and economic change. In such situations the Islamic district paradigm illuminates both the factors and the processes of change.

Can universal principles of behaviour, suggesting predictive models, be adduced from this case study? Is the Mullah’s story of revolt against an established administrative apparatus a harbinger of things to come in the Islamic world? Can we relate the Mullah’s movement to the current wave of fundamentalist revivalism surging in many Muslim countries? Is he to be seert as a modern revolutionary leader or a traditional product of Muslim structure and organisation? Is he the model leader of the future? Are we witnessing a shift in style and loci of leadership away from urban, Westernised elites? It is too early to provide clear answers, although tentative answers in the affirmative are suggested. There is almost no literature on such leaders and movements in the contemporary Muslim world. The Wana example shows what may be in store for Islamic government and societies in the coming decades.

The example of the Mullah of Waziristan suggests the strength and universality of what I have referred to as the Islamic district paradigm of social and political life. Contradiction is implicit in the paradigm and suggests tension in the society; the Wana case testifies to the relevance of the paradigm and the need for fuller investigation.

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[1] The themes of this article are explored at greater length in my forthcoming book (Ahmed 1983 b).

[2] The apprehensions which have revived as a result of recent developments are expressed by one of the leading Western authoritieis on Islam (Rodinson 1980: xixii):

The Iranian revolution and the (already disquieting) Muslim fundamentalist movements whose hopes it nurtured, changed all that, helped by the rising price of that petroleum with which Allah endowed his followers in such ample quantities. Once again the Muslim world became an entity jealously guarding its uniqueness, its own culture, comprising much more than just spirituality.

And might not this entity again become a threat, as it had only three centuries ago when the Ottoman armies laid siege to Vienna? Might the way of life so valued by the West be in serious danger?

[3] The district was the basic and key unit of administration in British India (Woodruff 1965). It was further divided into subdivisions and thanas. The district, in turn, was part of a division, which formed part of a province. In the Tribal Areas, the Agency corresponded to the district in the administrative universe. Although I call this intermediary level ‘district’ to help conceptualise the unit of analysis, district (or Agency) boundaries do not always correspond with ethnic ones, a fact which continues to create political problems. In some cases new ethnicity has developed as a result of a new district—for example, Hazarawal in Hazara District (Ahmed 1982). Pakistan, like India, retains the administrative structure it inherited after independence in 1947. Most districts and agencies remain largely rural in character and somewhat isolated from national developments. There is a vast body of literature on district life, most of it written by British district officers themselves; for a recent contribution, see Hunt and Harrison (1980). Academic neglect of the topic may be partly due to methodological considerations, as the district does not correspond either to the larger subject-matter—state, nation, or region—traditionally studied by political scientists, sociologists, and historians or to village society studied by anthropologists.

[4] I shall refer to the paradigm as ‘district’ rather than ‘agency’ because the former isolder and better known.

[5] I shall use the term ‘agnatic rivalry’ for conflict between males descended in the patrilineage from a common ancestor.

[6] ‘Mullah’ is a generic name for a religious functionary. The Oxford English Dictionary defines it as a ‘Mohammedan learned in theology and sacred law’. I refer to the Waziristan Mullah with a capital ‘M’ to distinguish him in the text. (In its usage of ‘Mohammedan’ here the Oxford English Dictionary continues to offend Muslims. ‘Mohammedan’ implies ‘a follower of Mohammed,’ and Muslims hold that a

Muslim is, as the word implies, a ‘believer’ in Allah and his follower only. ‘Mohammedan’ has been dropped from circulation even by Orientalists, who once used it [see, e.g., Gibb 1949].) ‘Waziristan,’ when used generally, refers to the area of North and South Waziristan Agencies. The name derives from the Wazir tribe. Wazir in Arabic and Urdu means ‘minister’.

[7] See Bruce 1929, Curtis 1946, General Staff 1921, 1932, 1936, Howell 1925, Johnson 1934a. 1934b and Johnston 1903.

[8] Maulana Mufti, based in Dera Ismail Khan, was to become an eminent leader in Pakistan politics. His simple habits, austere living standards and reputation for incorruptibility made him a respected and popular figure. He headed the Jamiat-i-Ulama-i-Islam (JUL), a party of religious scholars of Islam, as President and generally opposed the politics of the established governments, led by General Ayub Khan in the 1960s and Bhutto in the 1970s. Against the latter’s Pakistan People’s Party (PPP), he allied with the Pukhtun nationalists, the National Awami Party (NAP), and was Chief Minister, NWFP, from 1972–73. Until his death in 1980 he proved a strong and loyal patron to Mullah Noor Muhammad.

[9] The Mullah’s antipathy towards Haji Pasti can perhaps be explained by the memory of his father’s employment as mullah with Pasti’s father.

[10] Singular alirn, from ilm, meaning knowledge of the Quran, hadith, et.’

[11] Sartor is literally ‘black head* ; the name implies one whose head is uncovered as a result of poverty, grief, or some personal obsession (here an obsession with the cause of Islam). Baba is a term of respect for an elder.

[12] Jihad has been used in the contemporary world in dramatically nontraditional ways. For instance, in April 1981 an Indonesian

Muslim group called the Komando Jihad (‘Holy War Command’) hijacked a DC-9 belonging to Garuda Indonesian Airways. Indonesian commandos foiled their attempt at the Bangkok airport, killing all five hijackers. Although the idiom of jihad was employed, the case remains obscure. Jihad is also used for other daily, even secular, activity; there is at least one daily newspaper called Jihad in Pakistan.

[13] Barth. perhaps acknowledging the criticism, has recently reexamined his earlier work in Swat Pathans Reconsidered’ (Barth 1981). The study of Swat is not. however, over; see Meeker (1980)

[14] An anecdote illustrating this point is recounted by Mahsud (1970:92):

Mr. Mattak Khan is an ideal man I can quote. In his youth he had been a famous dacoit having a gang of daring and skilful fighters and artful thieves. He has a notorious record in this regard. But he has all along been very religious minded. He prays regularly, observes fasts, pays *zakat* [compulsory alms]—even from his stolen things. He serves religious leaders with great zeal and honesty.

One of his stories goes thus: He and his gang came out on an expedition of stealing cattles from a village in Jandola. He was telling me that they prayed their later afternoon [third] prayer at such and such place and started for the destination: prayed their evening prayer at such and such place and again moved ahead. At mid-night after the night prayer they reached the spot.

Like in the rest prayers of this day, they humbly prayed to Allah, besought great *pirs* and vowed to shrines to bless them with success. They held positions and started breaking though into the cattle band. After having successfully stolen the cattle, they made for their homes. Soon a group of armed villagers followed them. It was the morning prayer time; they prayed to Allah to save them and help them carry the cattle safely. They vowed that out of these cattle so many will be sacrificed and given in charity in the name of Allah and they called upon *pirs*; through their tactics they were

successful in bringing the cattle to their homes. Honest to their promises, they slaughtered some sheep and goats at shrines, gave some of them to Maulvis in charity—Maulvis have established that they are the most rightful receivers of charity. The Maulvis well in the know about these cattle, accepted these under the pretence that these were *halal* [pure] for them as they did not steal these and were given to them in the name of Allah and holy persons.

** Responses

[**Current Anthropology** received and accepted an article from Akbar S. Ahmed entitled “Islam and the District Paradigm: Emergent Trends in Contemporary Muslim Society,” which was duly circulated to commentators in the normal fashion. However, the article was published in the Middle East Journal (vol. 36, no. 2 [Spring 1982], pp. 184–203) under the title “Order and Conflict in Muslim Society: A Case Study from Pakistan,” with only minor variations of wording. There is also substantial overlap of material in an article published in Arab Studies Quarterly (vol. 4, nos. 1 and 2 [Spring 1982], pp. 127 ff.) under the title “Mullah, Mahdi, and Mosque: Emergent Trends in Muslim Society.” In view of the competition for space in current anthropology, and in view of our policy of republishing articles only in the most special circumstances, the article was withdrawn from publication. The best reference is to the Middle East Journal. In fairness to the author, however, and in recognition of the considerable work that the commentators have applied to his article, the comments and Ahmed’s reply to them are published below.—Editor.]

*** by Tahir Ali

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Ahmed raises issues which, in the current anthropological literature, have suffered a degree of neglect that is quite remarkable considering the scale, pace, and human consequences of the changes contemporary Muslim societies have been going through. As he notes, recent events in Iran, Pakistan, and elsewhere in the so-called arc of crisis point up how meager an understanding of popular Muslim religious movements is to be had from studies which focus on main centers of power and government and on traditions of legal formalism and scriptural learning. What is needed, and what anthropologists are well equipped to do, is to examine the forms and modalities of religious leadership and religious change in their sociocultural contexts and to elucidate the principles of social process which underlie these patterns. With these views one can only agree.

Ahmed's more specific methodological claims and recommendations, however, pose some real difficulties. He develops an interesting and suggestive narrative account to support his argument that the district or agency should be taken as the key proximate institutional framework for the analysis of "power, authority, and religious status, the central issues of Muslim society." The details of the narrative itself, it appears, are drawn from the official archives of the South Waziristan Agency and from his own experiences as political agent there. The stage on which the narrative unfolds is the agency headquarters and its immediate surround (the mosque, the bazaar, the elders' houses, etc.), and the principal actors are the figures who rule in these places. This comprises a neat microcosm but gives, I think, too narrow a view of the problem and, moreover, leads back to a predominant concern with the machinations of established leaders, thus repeating at a lower level an approach that has characterized so many of the studies of higher-order elites in Pakistan.

Ahmed rightly emphasizes the importance of taking explicit account of externally imposed administrative structures in explanatory models of local political systems, but it is unclear what is intended by referring to the district, a formal unit of administration, as "Islamic" and a "paradigm." The district is a construct of the British colonial administrative scheme which, of course, was applied to peoples of diverse religions and cultures. Perhaps it could be said that district administration was imposed differently on Muslim tribal communities or that it had consistently different consequences for them. The question then would become, Different from what? or,

alternatively, What are the distinctive features of an “Islamic” district? Although Ahmed’s discussion offers material for some plausible hypotheses, it does not confront this basic issue.

It may be, however, that an altogether simpler claim is being made—that a district is a “paradigm” in the sense that it is the relevant unit of analysis for the purpose at hand. This is surely true but at the same time insufficient. Much of the ad hoc character of Ahmed’s descriptive argument comes from viewing the Mullah’s career in its outward manifestations or end products, and this, in turn, results from an overreliance on the district perspective. The Mullah emerges at the district level a political force more or less fully formed —complete with willing followers, resources, a practiced style, and so on. We know little in any detail of how he came to be there or of the social processes which sustain his role, and for this part of his explanation Ahmed makes far too much of the Mullah’s supposed stratagems, boasts, and rationales. Undoubtedly the latter are ingredients of the Mullah’s self-image or of the image he displays outwardly, but there is little reason to believe that naive and gullible tribal folk accept them at face value. During my own field work among the Burusho of nearby Hunza it was common to come across headmen, elders, and others who thought they had pulled the wool over the eyes of visiting officials or eminent personages. An endlessly elaborated corpus of “eyewitness” accounts of amazing or unprecedented happenings surrounds the person of the Aga Khan (the majority of Burusho are Ismaili) and the memories of his first visit to the area. These come from the mouths of speakers who at the same time are quite capable of shrewdly assessing the power-political maneuvers involved in attaining positions of respect and influence in the Ismaili religious hierarchy and even of engaging in these maneuvers themselves.

In his explication of the bases of the Mullah’s authority and the idioms in which this authority is expressed, Ahmed sometimes conflates distinct types of religious persona. It must be stressed in particular that mullah and pir are poles apart, conceptually, socially, and in other ways. To speak of one in terms of the other seems an unnecessary muddying of the waters. I am puzzled, too, by the notion that pirs are rural recluses who do not engage actively in politics. Every national legislative assembly in Pakistan has had elected pirs, and the major national political parties covet pirs as assets for electoral campaigns and as proof of grass-roots popularity.

Ahmed is on firmer ground when he turns to an analysis of the interplay between the principles and values represented by the Mullah and those of the segmentary descent system. This implicitly reduces the district from a paradigm to one of many relational fields in which the Mullah's status is implicated. It somewhat confuses the issue, though, to speak of segmentary boundaries as if they referred to divisions between whole individuals and not to contextually marked aspects of jural status. Might this be at least partially to blame for the "false dichotomy" between tribal and religious identity that Ahmed sees at the heart of the analytic approaches deriving from the study of non-Islamic peoples?

*** by Robert L. Canfield

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Ahmed does a service by pointing out a number of issues raised by the recent apparent "resurgence" of Islam. A number of other studies purport to explain "what is stirring in the Muslim world" and the causes for it and should be compared with this one. The following provide important insights and helpful bibliographic information: Griffith (1979), Bonine and Keddie (1981), Fischer (1982), Kazem (1980), Keddie (19806), Keddie and Richard (1981), Ochsenwald (1981), and Pipes (1980).

Despite more than a generation of research on Islam as a tradition that provides the semantic framework for the directed behavior of Muslims, people still tend to think of Islamic movements as a form of hysteria. I suspect it is by inadvertence that Ahmed describes the Mullah as "creating a religious battle hysteria" among the Wazirs. It is not enough to suggest that movements involving hundreds or thousands (or, in the case of Iran, millions) of people are impelled by some form of excessive, irrational emotion. Emotion—hysteria— is always culturally informed. The explanation for massive social convulsions must include the body of understanding that people bring to a political situation. Although I appreciate

Ahmed’s emphasis on the importance of the Mullah, I have a problem with his too-brief description of the cultural framework that makes the Mullah’s influence possible. Some recent studies that direct attention to Islam as a frame of meaning that makes cooperative political action possible are Algar (1979), Akhavi (1980), Dupree (1980), Fischer (1980), Islam (1981), Keddie (1972, 1980a), Richard (1980), and Voll (1979).

*** by I. F. S. Copland

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The kernel of Ahmed’s engaging paper is a discussion of the meteoric rise to power of the self-styled Mullah of Waziristan in the late 1960s and early 1970s. This discussion is useful in demonstrating the range of options and techniques open to aspiring political leaders in a “traditional” society and the complexity of the motives (awe, fear, ignorance, obedience to religious authority, patronage, tribal collectivism, and millenarianism) that prompt others to follow them. What remains obscure, however, is why the Mullah decided to risk everything on a rather unequal struggle with the neighbouring Mahsuds. Ahmed asserts that there was an economic programme but omits to say whether this was just another example of the Mullah’s rhetoric. He also hints vaguely at past humiliations suffered by the Wazirs but fails to make the obvious point that tribal conflict between Wazir and Mahsud has been endemic in this area for at least a hundred years, fuelled by the steady encroachment of the faster-growing Mahsud community on traditional Wazir lands, by personal vendettas, and more recently by the apparent bias of the Pakistani political system, which resulted in the return of two Mahsuds to the provincial assembly in the 1950s (Caroe 1958). Another puzzle is how the Mullah was able to project himself at the expense of the tribal elders who form one side of the authority triangle in South Waziristan. The elders “saw political activity as their preserve,” yet they permitted an outsider from Bannu (albeit a Wazir) to seize and exercise that prerogative. It may be, as Ahmed suggests, that the Mullah’s relative foreignness was an advantage in that it freed him from the constraints of lineage structure, but in the absence of any discussion of how the elders reacted to the implicit threat we cannot really tell.

The paper also supports the findings of other recent South Asian area studies (e.g., Brass 1974, Copland 1981, Masselos 1976) that Islam at the local level is defined as much by ethnicity and political strategy as by ideology. Generally speaking, the study of Islam by cultural historians has taken a holistic tack: Muslims are portrayed as members of a cohesive brotherhood locked in more or less unceasing combat with non-Muslims. Especially in South Asia, this approach has been reinforced by the work of political historians on the emergence of Pakistan, which was, of course, predicated on the assumption that there were two “nations” in the subcontinent. More recently, greater attention has been focussed on provincial and local studies which reflect much more clearly the infinite variety of South Asian Islamic society; yet here again, Muslims generally have been shown in explicit or implicit opposition to Hindus (e.g., Dale 1981, MacPherson 1974, Miller 1976, Misra 1964). Ahmed reveals what happens when Muslim meets Muslim. Both the Wazirs and the Mahsuds are objectively orthodox Sunni Muslims, but this palpable bond is arrogantly brushed aside by the Mullah when he declares the Mahsuds to be kaffirs (unbelievers). Although he rather dodges the implications of this analysis by maintaining that the Pukhtuns recognize no distinction between belief and ethnicity, Ahmed’s evidence points clearly to the conclusion reached years ago by a prominent British administrator of the region: “I do not think any Mahsud would regard it as other than truthful, and even flattering, to be told that he was a Mahsud first and a Muslim afterwards” (Caroe 1958:397).

In the last analysis, however, one’s opinion of Ahmed’s essay will hinge on how one regards the “district paradigm” and his claim that the case of the Mullah of Waziristan constitutes a “predictive model” of Islamic behaviour. On the latter point, I think he has made a worthwhile contribution in highlighting the crucial role played in “grass-roots” Islamic society by lower-level religious mentors like the Mullah. Again, recent work on other regions of the subcontinent supports this view (Copland 1981, Dale 1981, Gilmartin 1979). On the other hand, it would be rash to underestimate the uniqueness of the events described, not simply because of the cultural and ethnic factors involved but because of the admitted peculiarities of the Mullah himself: his apparent unconcern with dogma, his palpable ambition and vanity, and his questionable morals. Nor am I wholly convinced about the value of the district paradigm. Applied to South Waziristan—an arid, pastoral region

sparsely settled by closely knit tribes—it makes good sense, particularly as in this case the tribal boundaries tend to conform with the administrative ones. Equally, though, there are parts of South Asia (e.g., Bangladesh) in which district boundaries have little cultural significance and regional or provincial studies might be more appropriate. Similarly, at the other end of the scale, studies of discrete villages and towns reveal verities hidden from the researcher working at the provincial or district levels. Of course, as a colonial historian I am sympathetic to Ahmed's view that the district paradigm represents "the perpetuation of one aspect of the colonial encounter." The case for continuity, here, is certainly very strong. Nevertheless, my reading of British Indian history tells me that the paramountcy of the district, in administrative terms, is long past, modern communications having turned the man on the spot into a creature of central power (Copland 1978). It was, after all, the Islamabad government that finally burst the Mullah's balloon.

*** by Dale F. Eickelman

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The seminal questions and excellent case study presented by Ahmed are significantly enriched by his awareness of his dual perspectives as sometime political agent and anthropological analyst. His dual role as "king of Waziristan" and anthropologist is rather unique, but his sensitivity to multiple analytical perspectives and insistence upon a hermeneutic anthropology as a point of departure are shared with earlier and contemporary writers (e.g., Asad 1972; Bourdieu 1977 [1972]: 33–71; Eickelman 1981:201–60).

The intrinsic interest and comparative potential of his essay could be enhanced if it were divested of spurious claims to uniqueness on the basis of incomplete or misleading characterizations of the work of other scholars and of entire disciplinary traditions. In view of the prodigious number of academic conferences on contemporary Islamic political movements in the last few years, to some of which Ahmed has contributed earlier versions of the present essay, it is difficult to agree with his broadside assertion that such movements have remained "largely unstudied" or have been approached

only through “traditional” analyses that have been crippled by “historically conditioned” hostile reactions on the part of the “West.” I shall attempt to provide a more accurate representation of current trends in the study of Islamic societies and related themes by both Muslim and non-Muslim scholars.

The disciplinary stereotype of anthropology as confined primarily to providing “useful tools” for “the analysis of small traditional Muslim groups” and based upon the study of presumably “self-sufficient” units such as “the typical anthropological village” might have been accurate through the mid-1950s but has been in rapid decline since (see Eickelman 1982). Studies such as that of Tambiah (1977) on Thai Buddhism or Werbner (1977) on African and Middle Eastern religiopolitical forms and, specifically for the Muslim world, those of Geertz (1968), Gilsenan (1973), O’Brien (1971), Siegel (1969), Kessler (1978), Fischer (1980), and Eickelman (1976, 1978) deal not with self-contained villages or tribes, but with regions or other “intermediate” units. Taken as a group, these studies strongly suggest that Ahmed’s “district paradigm” approach has been alive and well for some time.

An equivalent inattention to the work of scholarly contemporaries appears to have led the author to claim that the study of Muslim society by historians and scholars in other disciplines has rested “largely on traditional method and holistic [sfc] analysis” of rulers, dynasties, and the like. Only the qualification “largely” saves this statement from absurdity when one considers such studies as those of Merad (1967), who meticulously articulates reformist ideology and its carriers in Algeria of the 1930s within various regional contexts, Lapidus (1967) on medieval Damascus and its hinterland, Roff and colleagues (1974) on Kelantan, and Hassan (1980) on Muslim intellectuals in Indonesia.

A substantive example of Ahmed’s misreading of the scholarly record is his excoriation of a range of anthropologists for considering Islam as being “outside” tribal or other local social structures. Some “Europeans” (to employ Ahmed’s term) may well have succumbed to what he stereotypes as “orthodox methodology in Western thought” and adopted such a position, as have “non-Westerners” such as Salim (1962:12–13) and Abu Zayd (1964). Yet some of the authors that Ahmed cites, notably Geertz (1968) and Geertz,

Geertz, and Rosen (1979), argue precisely the opposite of the view he attributes to them. Likewise Siegel (1969), Kessler (1978), Eickelman (1976), and other “Westerners” insist, as does Ahmed, upon ascertaining how Islam is locally received and understood as an inherent component of a viable “anthropology” of Islam (although some religious intellectuals might object to this approach). It is significant that el-Zein (1977:252), a scholar cited by Ahmed in a context which might lead readers without access to el-Zein’s article to conclude that he advocates an anthropology of Islam by Muslims alone, in fact argues for quite the opposite. He seeks to develop an approach to the study of Islam in which invidious, distinctions between “East” and “West” will be replaced by the substantive discussion of conceptual and epistemological problems.

Few scholars would disagree with Ahmed when he argues that adequate social anthropological explanation must take into account local ideological understandings of the social order. To realize this objective he might find it useful to abandon his uncritical assertion that segmentary ideology and theory are applicable throughout the Islamic Middle East, a position qualified even by staunch advocates of segmentation theory such as Gellner (1981:56–73). This important point is obscured by Ahmed’s unsatisfactory account of objections to segmentary theory and claim that “no satisfactory alternative has been offered.” In the first place, Ahmed confuses “segmentary consciousness” as explicit locally maintained exegesis of some tribal social orders (such as Wazir tribesmen) with segmentation as sociological theory, a confusion prevalent in his earlier work (Kurin 1982). As for “satisfactory alternatives” to segmentation theory, a start might be Peters’s (1967) meticulous demonstration of the shortcomings of segmentary ideology as sociological theory and Hammoudi’s (1980 [1974]) more comprehensive critique. The contributions of Peters and Hammoudi indicate that such misgivings are far from being confined to Americans, as Ahmed claims.

Ahmed’s essay opens with the claim that he is presenting a “predictive” model. He ends with a more modest yet significant set of comparative questions suggested by his case study. I suggest that the next step for Ahmed in providing the “clear” answers he seeks is to relate his case study more specifically to the work of scholarly contemporaries concerned with homologous issues elsewhere.

*** by Ruth McVey

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Ahmed is right in saying that the present Islamic revival should be studied at local as well as national levels, since it is shaped by preexisting social patterns as well as by attitudes towards formal authority structures. But is it best visible in tribal settings, as he proposes in presenting his Pukhtun case as a general model? In support he remarks that anthropological investigations of Muslim society have been divided between village and tribal studies, the former showing that Muslim villages are much like any others but the latter being a source of important and original anthropological conclusions. Perhaps we should deduce from this that Islam is properly a tribal religion, but more likely—since the great anthropological studies have generally been devoted to tribal or equivalent cultures and not to peasants—it is a reminder that we need more and better work on peasant society.

Even more necessary, perhaps, are studies of Islam in urban settings. Ahmed does not include this as a usual category for the good reason that there has been precious little work on it, but it is here if anywhere that the Muslim revival is centred. What distinguishes the current Islamic ferment from earlier (and still continuing) religious mobilization is the fact that in many respects it accepts urban, industrial society, attempting to provide meaning and organization for people caught up in the massive social and cultural changes entailed by modernization. That it tends to be anti-Western, anticapitalist, and “irrational” by no means denies this. The Islamic revival is not solely urban, but it is the urban element that is (relatively) new and that has made the difference in terms of social spread and political consequence. Urban is of course not necessarily national, though urban-based movements are more likely to be aware of and reacting against national elites and policies than are rural ones. I would suggest that we can understand the Islamic revolution in Iran better by looking at the rise of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt than by considering tribal movements.

We also need to ask whether religious revival of this type is peculiar to Islam, however much emphasis petrodollars and the Iranian revolution have given to its appearance in Muslim societies. The question may not be evident in religiously homogeneous regions, but in Southeast Asia the Muslim revival— which is marked in Malaysia and also evident in Indonesia— seems to share much more in terms of social sources and goals with contemporaneous Catholic radicalism in the Philippines and Buddhist activism in Thailand than it does with longstanding ethnic/religious movements among Muslims in the backlands.

*** by M. Nazif Shahrani

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Ahmed’s provocative essay has raised many crucial questions concerning the anthropological study of the nature, contexts, and structure of contemporary Islamic movements. While I find myself in agreement with his assessment that an “understanding of these movements and their long-term impact on social structure and organization is fundamental for Muslims and those dealing with Muslim societies,” I find his treatment of the issues raised less than satisfactory.

I share the sense of urgency with which Ahmed invites Third World scholars “to turn inward and dispassionately examine their own societies,” and I applaud his own attempt in this paper to discuss “Muslim society as it is, not as it should be.” I also have some sympathy for his assessment of the shortcomings of traditional village studies and studies of what he calls the larger “configuration of Muslim society,” such as regions, tribes, nations, and so on. I am not, however, convinced that in its present form his proposed “Islamic district paradigm” provides the alternative intermediate conceptual, methodological, or analytical framework he is promising us in this paper. I am not sure, for example, what is Islamic about an artificially created and colonially imposed administrative unit called a district or agency, or what is paradigmatic about a district or agency so defined. Ahmed’s identification and description of the three spheres of

leadership within the district certainly do not make a paradigm if one accepts the way the concept of paradigm has been introduced and elaborated upon by Kuhn (1970). Such leadership categories are present and identifiable in Muslim societies from village to nation level and have been used by many anthropologists in their studies of Muslim society. Ahmed has promised “to construct the Islamic district (or agency) paradigm of sociocultural process,” but either he has not done so or I have failed to follow it in his paper. He contends that at the core of his Islamic district paradigm lies his ethnographic analysis of the traditional agnatic rivalry between Wazir and Mahsud tribes in a tribal agency in Pakistan, in which the Waziristan Mullah plays the central role. However, it is at the core of his proposed Islamic district paradigm that I find his discussion suffers from serious ethnographic omissions, and in some cases inconsistencies, which undermine his analysis.

Much of Ahmed’s analysis is based on his arguments concerning the alleged ambiguity surrounding the concept of mullah in Muslim society, which he says the Waziristan Mullah used to his advantage by creating new roles for himself in order to achieve his high political and economic aspirations. It would appear, however, that part of this ambiguity is a function of Ahmed’s own assumption that “perceptible beneath the ferment [i.e., contemporary Islamic movements] are shadowy figures, no more than simulacra, in the shape of religious leaders—mullah, maulvi, sheikh, or ayatullah.” I believe that any ambiguity surrounding the concept of mullah could have been avoided if Ahmed had given us a clear definition of “mullah” based on his own ethnographic knowledge rather than quoting the conceptually and analytically useless definition given by the Oxford English Dictionary and Algar (1969:264). He introduces further ambiguities into his discussion of the Waziristan Mullah by categorizing mufti, qazi, and maulana or maulvi without any further clarification as ulema who represent orthodoxy, bureaucracy, and legalistic tradition in Islam. Ethnographically there are some subtle but significant differences among these religious functionaries. To begin with, unlike qazi and mufti, mullah and maulvi are not on the government payroll as part of the official judiciary system, although they are often consulted by the public on legal issues. The most critical feature differentiating mullah from maulvi or maulana is educational achievement. Generally “Maulvi” is a title earned, not simply claimed, by those who complete a standard course of Islamic education in a recognized madrassah. This accomplishment is marked by public ceremony and often by the issuance of a written document by the “professors” at the madrassah.

Traditionally, earning this title qualified an individual for a government job as qazi and mufti, as a teacher in a madrassah, or as an imam in the larger urban (or, sometimes, rural) mosques in which Friday prayers are conducted and sermons delivered. “Mullah,” on the other hand, refers to the functionary who has not completed his course of studies. Thus, the competence of mullahs may vary enormously. Mullahs are not considered qualified as qazi and mufti, and they are never hired as imams of the Friday mosques or as teachers at madrassahs. Instead, they are hired by members of local mosques or, in some urban centers, appointed by the government to conduct community rituals. The scholarly accomplishments and competence of Islamic functionaries, whether mullahs or maul vis, are judged only by their peers but are well known to the public.

In Ahmed’s paper the Waziristan Mullah is reified almost to the point of caricature; we learn very little about him as a person. We do not know anything about his educational background, but since he is a mullah one suspects he has not finished his studies and therefore is not qualified to teach in a madrassah. Yet he builds a central mosque with schools (madrassah) and dormitories in Wana, a major town with more than 400 shops. We are not told who taught the talib (seekers of knowledge or students) or who attended the Wana central mosque madrassah. We do learn that visiting talib (translated as “scholar” by Ahmed), “most of them sons of Wazir elders,” stayed in the madrassah dormitories. Unless Wazir attitudes towards religious education have changed recently, this seems inconsistent with Ahmed’s earlier assertion that religious education was the domain of some non-Pukhtun groups and a few poor Pukhtuns from weaker lineages. If a change has indeed taken place, a fuller discussion of it seems crucial for the case study. The Waziristan Mullah is said to have “imitated and developed some formalistic aspects of bureaucracy associated with the political agent,” but Ahmed does not say who the members of the Mullah’s bureaucratic organization and his “cabinet” were. Were they other religious functionaries or Ahmedzai Wazir leaders?

The Mullah’s success is explained teleologically. He is neither qazi nor saint nor sufi, but like other charismatic leaders in the area possesses his own bag of tricks (for example, prediction of events by listening to the radio himself while banning its use by his followers and the ingenious use of his recently acquired “magic eye”). Two explanations are offered by Ahmed as to why the

Mullah's "aspiring to spiritual [and thus political] status through mumbo jumbo" among the Wazirs has succeeded: the ignorance and indifference of the Pukhtun tribes, as indicated by his direct quotes from the Nalkot Mullah (also see Ahmed 1980:167), and the overwhelming desire on the part of the Wazirs to see their "pir in miraculous flight" because of their need for a saviour to deliver them from their enemy and to give them group pride and identity. Justification of exploitation of tribesmen on the basis of their alleged ignorance by local, as well as outside, forces in itself is not new or novel, but accepting it as a valid explanation turns the tough, independent, self-assertive Pukhtun warriors into so many simpletons. Their blind submission to the whims of the trickster Mullah of Waziristan, a man devoid of any appreciable legitimate Islamic virtues, for the sake of their "group pride" sounds like collective self-deception. Also problematic is how and when the Wazirs were humiliated at the hands of the Mahsuds. Ahmed diagnoses the genesis of the problem to be lodged in the genealogical charter of the two Pukhtun tribes and concludes that "to understand the charter is to unlock the mysteries surrounding the problem," but he seems not to have done so in this paper.

The role of the tribal khans (Mahsud and Wazir alike) and that of the political agent (the "crowned" king of Waziristan with vast powers) in the Mullah episodes remain very enigmatic. The Mullah seems to have had center stage for years, provoking and creating conflicts and inciting a revolt. The political agent acts in the end, but only on the orders of the highest authority in the central government of Pakistan. One has to ask why the district administration or central government did not use their maulvis and mullahs to counter the Wazir Mullah's claims with religious arguments. Or did they?

I find Ahmed's explanation of the breakdown of segmentary rule among the Wazirs in their war by proxy against the Mahsuds totally inadequate. By stating that the Wazirs outside the tribal agency are restricted by agency borders and rendered impotent in their efforts to assist the Ahmedzais of the South Waziristan agency, Ahmed externalizes the impetus for the Wazir decision not to take part in the crisis created by the Mullah in Wana. It is not clear whether it was district boundaries alone or soldiers guarding those boundaries that made the Wazirs unable to act. Nor is it clear whether even within the Waziristan agency all Mahsuds and all Wazirs participated in the conflict in accordance with segmentary rules. His argument that the district

boundaries explain the collapse of the operation of the rules of segmentary opposition among the Wazirs is unconvincing in the light of the data he presents. I think that Ahmed's insistence on the explanatory value of the segmentary model has led him to overlook an important component of the debate on the subject, namely, the distinction made between the "ideal" or "formal" ideology of tribal segmentation elicited from tribal "philosophers" and the "practical ideology" of segmentation discernible in the observed behavior of tribesmen in times of crisis (see, for example, Eickelman 1981:85–104; Bourdieu 1977(1972]: 35–36; Marx 1977; Salzman 1979). From the practical ideological point of view, could it be that the other Wazirs found the reasons for the conflict between the Mullah and their Ahmedzai cousins and the Mahsuds unreasonable or unjust and therefore decided not to take part in it? As Gellner (1969:46) has pointed out, " 'Good' fratricide, of a brother held to be a scoundrel, is of course liable to be not merely permissible, but laudatory and even obligatory" in even "pure" segmentary societies such as the Berbers of the high Atlas. Are we to believe that the breakdown in the segmentary rules among the Wazirs had never occurred before in a similar situation? And that now that it has happened because of the imposition of district boundaries, it will be permanent?

I find Ahmed's case study of the Mullah of Waziristan more in the traditional mold of tribal-religious rebellion in this region of the world than informative about contemporary Islamic movements. I seriously doubt that one would find any tendency towards such movements in tribal territories or peasant villages. I believe the major urban centers are the more likely places for the emergence of Islamic revolutionary movements, with Muslim educated youth, both secular and Islamic, as the active agents. The ongoing Islamic revolutionary movements in Afghanistan, Iran, Turkey, Syria, and Egypt, to name only a few, testify to this fact. I do not mean to say that the tribal and non tribal rural elements do not have a part to play; they certainly do, but it is the cities and the educated Muslims who will set the pace and express the mood, not the "tribes of Islam."

*** by Bahram Tavakolian

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One of the most significant dilemmas in contemporary anthropological theory is the problem of relating community-level social organization and ideology to national-level institutions and processes. Although Ahmed does not confront this issue in its entirety, his suggestion of a “district paradigm” is a major step toward bringing about such a linkage. He has made segmentary organization and Islam come alive as active agents of mobilization and change at the district level, and he has done so without sacrificing an appreciation of macro-level processes in Pakistan or of local-level systems of meaning and identity among the Wazirs.

As he intends, Ahmed captures a sense of “what is stirring in the Muslim world.” He demonstrates that this requires an interweaving of ethnic, religious, political, and economic dimensions of action within a holistic perspective and not an artificial separation of the political from the religious, the ecological from the cultural, etc. Additionally, he is clearly sensitive to the need to “translate” the cultures of Islamic society and to avoid stereotypical and static, as well as romanticized, images. Ahmed never lapses into simplistic “Orientalist” dichotomizations of the “Muslim mind” and Western thought, but he does effectively identify how the goals of urban, Westernized elites are reinterpreted and transformed in communities affected by modernization and development programs. By showing that political movements such as those led by the Mullah of Waziristan are not merely reactions to outside forces, Ahmed helps us understand the inherent structures of tension and conflict and the forces of change at the district level of organization.

It is the latter which I take to represent the predictive aspect of Ahmed’s district paradigm. His dynamic view of intercommunity and interethnic relations leaves little room for a view of society based on isolated communities organized on principles of consensus, order, and stability. Ahmed’s discussion of segmentation “as a blueprint for social identity and not for political action” is a particularly useful treatment of the negotiable and frequently pragmatic elements of alliance formation.

Because of the wide applicability of his interpretation of segmentation theory and of interconnected religious and political forces at the district level, I wonder why Ahmed places what may be an unnecessary limit on the universality of the district paradigm. He restricts himself to tribal agencies and districts of Pakistan and elsewhere where Muslim populations have come under the influence of the British colonial administrative structure. However, the district may also be understood metaphorically and not solely in terms of an official political structure or an outcome of colonialism. Certainly, the same or similar patterns of interaction and rivalry between leaders and between ethnic groups exist in regions of the Islamic world that were never directly part of the colonial encounter, for example, Iran and Afghanistan. Furthermore, the present-day attempts of nation-states to consolidate centralized political rule replicate the colonial district without necessarily establishing the role of the district officer.

A related issue is how district-level political processes and revolutionary movements affect the workings of the nationstate itself. While the activities of the Mullah of Waziristan were not directed at Bhutto, what part did such movements play in his political downfall, or in that of Hafizullah Amin in Afghanistan? In further work by Ahmed I hope to see a more fully articulated analysis of how the Mullah may represent the “model leader of the future” and what this implies about the future of national politics in Pakistan.

Similarly, aside from their strength in numbers, why did the Mahsuds emerge victorious in the conflict? Why, in particular, was the district administration viewed as a tool of the Mahsuds in their conflict with the Wazirs? In what ways did the Pakistani state, rather than “primordial ethnicity,” influence the emergence of the Mullah’s revolutionary movement? Ahmed does attempt answers to some of these questions, but they may require further attention to events and structures beyond the district and perhaps outside the scope of the predictive aspects of the district model.

Nevertheless, Ahmed provides a start toward recognizing the interplay between community and state, and he is even more successful in his integration of lineage and Islam, religious and political leadership, and traditional and revolutionary ideology. Beyond all else, Ahmed dares to

accept Geertz’s challenge that anthropology make complexity more intelligible through this very provocative and illuminating essay.

** Reply by Akbar S. Ahmed

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Through the Waziristan case study I hoped to draw attention to four points I saw as important in the study of contemporary Islamic movements. The first was to try and capture some of the complexity of these movements by delineating the interplay of the sequences of economic and political events within which they occur. For instance, the Waziristan case study is played out against a changing economic (new income generated from remittances from the Gulf States, major development projects, etc.) and political (the breakup of Pakistan in 1971, the emergence of Bhutto, etc.) backdrop. The emergence of the Mullah is related to economic and political change in Waziristan. It is not enough, however, to analyze such movements in a simple economic or political framework. What is required, to quote Tavakolian, is “an interweaving of ethnic, religious, political and economic dimensions of action within a holistic perspective.”

The second point was to examine movements set in rural/ tribal society, away from urban centers. Rural movements are, of course, only one aspect of contemporary Islamic movements. There are equally important ones in urban centers (as is pointed out by McVey), in the universities, in the military, etc.

Thirdly, I considered it important to stress the district, a level that is neither village nor province and is often neglected in analysis. The British district in South Asia was quite distinctive in colonial history. Anthropologists who have studied Muslim society in, for instance, Morocco would find fundamental administrative differences between Morocco and Pakistan despite their surface similarities. This is why Eickelman has difficulty in appreciating the district unit, and this difficulty leads him to make the serious methodological

mistake of lumping such structurally diverse categories as Geertz's Moroccans, Gilsenan's Cairenes, and Lapidus's medieval Damascenes with tribal Waziristanis. This is exactly the sort of imprecision I am warning against. My attempt was to call attention to the value of the district for analytical purposes. Similar directions have been suggested by, for example, Richard Antoun. I do not agree with Copland in his playing down of the contemporary importance of the district. Indeed, in certain areas the imposition of district boundaries has helped to create a district ethnic identity, such as among the Hazarawal of Hazara district (Ahmed 1982Z>)« Having had district experience in the Frontier Province, Punjab, and what is now Bangladesh, I can vouch for the continuing importance of the district and its personnel in rural social and political life. From flood control to family planning, the district officer either directly or indirectly has a decisive say in the organization of social life in rural areas. It is this continuing importance after Independence of a structure so obviously colonial that generates tension. The problem of the district remains unresolved in Pakistan and Bangladesh and may be understood with reference to what I call the Islamic district paradigm. Nonetheless, the importance of the district must not be exaggerated; it was—as Copland rightly points out—Islamabad that "finally burst the Mullah's balloon."

The combination of the words "Islamic" and "district paradigm" may have led—justifiably—to some confusion. What is Islamic about the district? The district, as I have pointed out, is a legacy of the colonial period, and this is one reason fundamental problems remain endemic to administration. The word "Islamic" seemed to me appropriate because we are dealing with an entirely Muslim society, the key actors being Muslim in a self-consciously Islamic state. Although not Islamic in a theological sense, the paradigm therefore remains Islamic in a sociological sense. If we can categorize the Republic of Pakistan as Islamic, the constitution of Pakistan as Islamic, and, despite strong protest by Pakistan, its nuclear programme as Islamic, why can we not categorize the districts of Pakistan as Islamic?

Finally, my aim was to suggest that the nature of religion itself is embedded not only in society, but in historically determined tribal configurations and ethnic patterns that partly determine the manner of its articulation. In this sense my essay complements the work of other social scientists studying Islamic groups, especially the important contributions of anthropologists such

as Clifford Geertz and Ernest Gellner. The discussion might have benefited from comment on the substantive issues arising from the case study in the light of commentators' own field data. For instance, do mullahs exist in other societies (Morocco?)? If not, why not? Who fills their roles (the igurramen?y? How does this affect dealings with central administration in times of crisis? What are the structural mechanisms for dealing with a breakdown of order such as occurred in Waziristan?

Writing the essay, however, presented me with problems. The major one was that of extracting an essay from a book, thereby sacrificing the cultural framework, historical perspective, etc. (and leaving partly unanswered questions regarding the background of the Mullah such as those asked by Shahrani). Another was that I was unable to provide adequate information either on the interaction between the Mahsuds and the Political Agent or on the reasons they acted as they did. Yet another problem concerned segmentary politics. My suggestion of a segmentary-like agnatic rivalry between two major anthropologists arguing the merits of segmentary theory — Geertz (anti) and Gellner (pro)—and their respective followings was made in a lighthearted vein that Eickelman, as one of Geertz's leading disciples, has taken too literally. In Waziristan, tribal society does reflect some of the major characteristics of segmentary theory; the theory helps explain social action and phenomena. Case studies like mine, however, illustrate the defects of applying the segmentary argument too literally. I cannot classify myself as either a proponent or an adversary of segmentary theory and am uncomfortable with Eickelman's line-up (see Ahmed and Hart 1982).

Thus, in presenting the case study, I confronted some of the problems mentioned by the commentators and did not resolve them satisfactorily. I emphasize that the essay is exploratory and attempts to raise relevant questions rather than provide easy answers. The problems mentioned above are discussed at greater length in Part 2 of my Religion and Politics in Muslim Society (1982a). Part 3 raises other theoretical and methodological issues arising from my role as Political Agent of the South Waziristan Agency from 1978 to 1980 through detailed case studies.

It is important that an attempt be made to draw together knowledge regarding Islamic society and social movements in the contemporary world

in order to elucidate principles of social structure and process in times of change. We may thereby be in a position to fulfill one of the functions of anthropology, which is to understand society and through this understanding to reach conclusions which may enable us to comprehend and perhaps ease some of the contemporary social tensions.

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Abstract

Cultural ideas of self shape, and in turn are shaped by, the political, and economic contexts in which they occur. The historical depth of scholarly resources available for the Middle East allows these transformations to be explored in detail and over long periods of time, whether the primary focus of inquiry is ideas of trust, patronage, and loyalty in eleventh century Iraq and Iran (Mottahedeh 1980), naming patterns as indications of long-term shifts in political perceptions and cultural identities (Bulliet 1978) or, as in this volume, the structuring of self in contemporary Middle Eastern societies.

The cultural and social complexity of the Middle East contributed until the last two decades to an attenuated range of anthropological studies available for the region. In the early 1970s, one anthropologist asserted that “so far as anthropology is concerned, the level (and the extent) of research is retarded behind almost any other major area of the world, with the possible exception of Eastern Europe” (Geertz 1972:462). Even allowing for our discipline’s capacity for hyperbolic self-criticism, this judgment can be accepted as valid in one crucial respect. Until recent decades, anthropological theory was oriented primarily toward small-scale, bounded societies, “elementary” in a Durkheimian sense, or societies which could be

plausibly treated as if they were. Middle Eastern pastoral societies most readily fit this characterization and therefore received more attention than did the study of other Middle Eastern social groups. Until fifteen years ago, no major contribution to anthropological theory emerged from Middle Eastern anthropology which affected the discipline as a whole since W. Robertson Smith's Religion of the Semites (1972 [orig. 1889]), if he can be adopted as an anthropological predecessor. Even the work of Emrys Peters (esp. 1967), which implicitly raised serious reservations concerning segmentary lineage theory, received minimal attention from nonarea specialists.

Pierre Bourdieu's seminal Outline of a Theory of Practice (1977; cf. Eickelman 1979) signalled a major intellectual shift in anthropological thinking and marked the reintegration of Middle Eastern studies into the main currents of anthropological thought. In recent years there has been a shift away from emphasis upon an almost exclusive concern with symbolic forms, a dominant trend in American cultural anthropology until the late 1960s, toward discerning how systems of meaning are transmitted and reproduced. To take but one instance of this shift, Ortner (1984; see also Cohn 1981) argues that the reintroduction into anthropology of a political economy approach in the 1960s contributed to a "rediscovery" of history after a long interval of prior neglect. This same trend also facilitated renewed anthropological attention to the study of complex societies, thus providing anthropologists concerned with the Middle East an audience beyond the narrow domain of regional specialists. In the Middle East, as elsewhere, there has been a growing effort since the 1960s to link broad economic and political trends with their consequences for specific social groups and classes (e.g., Seddon 1981; Hopkins 1983), to assess the social context and implications of innovative religious ideologies (e.g., Kepel 1984) and such themes as transformations in the idea and implications of mass education in the region (e.g., Eickelman 1985b).

Recognition that systems of meaning shape, and in turn are shaped by, the political and economic contexts in which they occur has become, at least in principle, a familiar part of the intellectual landscape. In practice, however, most studies assume, rather than explore, the complex, multidimensional relationships between politics and economics on the one hand and belief systems on the other. Studies of political economy by anthropologists have

tended to emphasize economic factors above all others, in part perhaps to compensate for the earlier neglect of economic considerations. This shortcoming is not inherent in the approach. The studies in this volume suggest practical exemplars by which equal attention can be given to the study of how “meanings” not directly in concord with Western notions of politics and economics motivate people, facilitate their making sense of the social world, and inform social action. The papers in this special issue discern and analyze the shape of such meanings in a variety of Middle Eastern contexts.

A fully developed “political economy of meaning” contrives to achieve a balance between concern with the communication and development of complex belief systems and how these systems shape and in turn are shaped by configurations of political domination and economic relations among groups and classes in societies of different levels of complexity. In itself, this goal is not unique. Indeed, it is one of the central concerns of classical social thought. Nonetheless,advocates of the political economy approach have often remained primarily at the level of theoretical exposition or implicit assumption.

The elaboration of such concepts in the context of specific societies has become common only in the last few years. With it has come a renewed attention to historical transformations in which ideas of self and society are maintained, a particular concern of the essays by Marcus and Olson, and above all an intensified concern with different understandings of self and social action within particular societies. Along these lines, a distinguishing feature of the papers in this volume is an attention to the social location of actors. Ideologies and practices are fundamentally dependent upon the social institutions through which they are communicated and reproduced. Some meanings are shared, others are challenged or denied, and most are consciously or implicitly altered in the process of transmission. Class, social category, generation (in Mannheim’s sense), gender, and status all provide different conjunctions from which ideas and practices are learned, valued, transmitted, and reproduced. Ideas of self are not just individually held, nor are they necessarily shared in an undifferentiated manner throughout a society. Regardless of whether the carriers of these ideas participate in formal political processes, they possess a political significance.

One example of how wider political and economic contexts impinge upon notions of self and necessitate attention to long-term historical change is the shifting ideas of politics and the state in the Middle East from the early nineteenth century to the present. In the nineteenth century, first in Egypt and subsequently elsewhere, politics was redefined as control. Among Egypt's political elite, "politics" (as-siyasa) shifted in meaning from an earlier usage in Arabic (with parallels in Persian and Turkish) denoting no more than the practice of governing to one signifying a distinct field of knowledge and practice concerned with regulation, management, and supervision. Politics now signified the discipline, order, control, and well-being of both individuals and the state (Mitchell 1984:116–18). In earlier epochs, the subjects of Middle Eastern empires were considered primarily in the aggregate. Henceforth, despite frequent rebellions and resistance, they were individuals to be counted, policed, ordered, taxed, conscripted, educated, and inspected (Mitchell 1984). This new notion of politics and the state necessarily brought with it changed notions of person, responsibility, and political roles—notions not always accepted without resistance or providing the results intended by their carriers.

The essays in this volume explore complementary facets of the basic shift in how systems of meaning are currently contested and maintained in Middle Eastern contexts. Steven Caton's essay on the northern Yemeni highlands ranges well beyond the ostensible topic of men's poetic competitions at wedding feasts. The social and political contexts of Arabic tribal poetry have been delineated in earlier scholarly literature, and also in a recent study by a Saudi (Sowayan 1985) who grew up in the tribe whose poetry he describes and analyzes, but Caton goes beyond the earlier approaches specified in his essay. His theoretical point of departure is George Herbert Mead's notion of the "reflexive" self, which emerges and self-transforms in public acts.

Caton argues that one becomes a man of honor in northern Yemen, and thus worthy of challenge, by composing poetry. Everyone is supposed to know the art of performance, although only the most talented persons take leading roles in these clearly delineated competitive performances, the "challenge and riposte" (da wa w-ijdbd). Formulaic phrases are invoked in poetic recitals, but the "true glory of the poetic deed" comes in verse lines

improvised in the challenges and retorts. The audience knows the rules of poetic style, and judges competitors in terms of their creative skill in sharpened competition against other skilled poets. In Caton's account, as in a recent paper by Abu-Lughod (1985) on the significance of poetry to Awlad 'Ali women of Egypt's western desert region, the discussion of Middle Eastern "honor" extends well beyond an earlier invocation of stereotyped normative rules, including those implicit in segmentary lineage theory (Eickelman 1981:85–104). Emphasis is placed instead upon an historically anchored construction of reputation for self and group.

The essay by Michael Marcus explores the historical dimension of the personal and collective "moral imagination" of a tribal group in western Morocco, with an emphasis upon the intertwined political and moral dimensions of historical thought. History is not just a record of what happened in the past, but a way of conceiving of self and society. For the Ghiyata, as for Muslim societies elsewhere, one dimension of selfconception is an Islamic one, which they use to differentiate themselves from townsmen and to formulate their social ideology. The Islamic dimension of self and conduct is not far from their consciousness. Even if not politicized in the same manner as by fundamentalist militants elsewhere in Morocco, they measure their own conduct and that of officials and townsmen against their conception of Islamic ideals. The vocabulary to speak of such issues is a current one, including "internal colonialism," i.e., recognition of the monarchy's attempts to manipulate religious ideas and institutions to its own benefit.

Ghiyata identity, like that of tribes in north Yemen, is sharpened in competition with coexisting identities, especially those of townsfolk, who in turn identify themselves in opposition to "ignorant" tribesmen. Official chronicles of Moroccan history portray the local cosmos as revolving about the ruler; the alternative interpretation of historical events contained in the oral poetry of the Ghiyata invokes instead an idealized standard of Islamic conduct. Their poetry is in local dialect, not in the classical Arabic of the traditionally educated, but the values to which they appeal are self-consciously considered to be universals.

The scale of Emelie Olson's paper differs markedly from the preceding two, indicating how Turkey's ongoing debate concerning the relation of religion to national identity is conducted. Turkey's national elite have advanced a secular, "modern" image in which the public expression of religious identity is strongly discouraged. Ataturk's 1925 order that all men had to wear a European-style hat in public came to symbolize a whole series of nationalist reforms. In a similar manner, the wearing by women of headscarves, interpreted by some Turks as Islamic, has recently generated heated public debate. Beyond the pale of Sovietbloc countries, and today the Islamic Republic of Iran, few anthropological observers have perfected the technique of newspaper interpretation to document profound currents of popular expression. Olson manages to do so with skill, describing and analyzing the terms in which Turkish protagonists conducted the 1984 headscarf debate. She provides a thorough contextual explanation of just why the headscarf came to be adopted as such a poignant symbol. Again, there is an emphasis in her account upon linking the articulate protagonists of the newspaper debate with profound underlying popular currents of expression and identity, which themselves get transformed and modified in the course of ongoing debate and conflict.

Evelyn Early rescues from its prior oblivion a narrative form, especially prevalent among Egyptian women, to which she gives the deceptively uninspiring name of "everyday narrative." These narratives are near-formulaic commentaries on the "progression of events embedded in, but stylistically distinguished from, more descriptive everyday discourse." A visit to the doctor, an encounter with bureaucracy, a quarrel with a neighbor, or the death of a child provides the occasion for recitation of such a narrative. Through such narratives, the incidents of women's lives and their significance are "negotiated" with a supportive audience, who recount similar experiences and affirm or modify the narrator's interpretation of events. Meaning is given to mundane experience, not through the invocation of abstract normative or cultural principles; to borrow a notion from Rosen (1985), it is negotiated with significant others.

The boundaries of Early's "everyday narratives" touch on even more shades of meaning than the poetic recitals depicted by Caton and Marcus or the formal newspaper debate described by Olson. Her account of how she ceased to discount them altogether in favor of formal "ritual," which prior

anthropological training taught her to value more highly, itself depicts the greater attention paid to the specific contours of the form and context of cultural expression now as opposed to even the recent past of anthropology.

Of the papers in the volume, Soheir Sukkary-Stolba's relies less upon direct citations of opinions of Egyptian women in development communities, built to take advantage of land reclaimed from the desert. One reason is that, as an "insider" offering an anthropological input to developmental projects in her own nation, Sukkary-Stolba's presentation of the consequences of development for women's roles had to be couched in a more formal, statistical idiom. The rhetoric of anthropology does not exist in a vacuum, but presumes a specific audience, as Sukkary-Stolba's paper implicity suggests. The initial audience for her research. Egyptian and American planners were disposed to believe that they had prior knowledge of the attitudes and values of Egyptians toward development projects, and would have resented a qualitative discussion of "values" even if many urban Egyptians have only a remote understanding of peasant life. Alone in this volume, Sukkary-Stolba's contribution suggests the strategies used by an "indigenous" anthropologist (Fahim 1982) to integrate basic questions of cultural values with technocratic notions of development.

Women of village origin who were offered an opportunity to live in a development town responded favorably to the move. It liberated them from traditional restrictions upon participating in agricultural work, the market, and education. Indeed, Sukkary-Stolba's analysis suggests that life in development communities induced significant unintended, but welcome, changes in women's notion of self and appropriate conduct. In contrast, educated urban women were much less successful at adapting, in part because of a failure "to rise above their Egyptian middle-class values against manual and domestic labor." The chance to own land and raise the status of their household was a paramount value for women of village origin, but not for educated "professional" women, who saw a move to a development town as a decided loss of status and a curtailment of the multiple opportunities perceived as available in urban life.

Anne Betteridge's essay applies Marcel Mauss's insight into gift and exchange to Iran. Iranians sharply distinguish between an "intimate" self,

which can safely be revealed only to close family, intimate friends, saints, and God, and a more formal, guarded, official self, and are careful not to reveal more than intended about notions of oneself or about the status of others. The form and contexts of gift-giving in Iran offers an index to these underlying conceptions. Stereotyped, impersonal gifts serve as a "generalized currency" for exchange with outsiders. Only in a circle of intimates do gifts take on a personal and expressive quality. Betteridge manages carefully to articulate the significance of gift giving in terms of status, intimacy and formality, gender, and other distinctions important to the Iranian expression of self.

Jon Anderson's paper deliberately ranges beyond the confines of Afghan ethnography. In part his essay is explicitly informed, as is Caton's, by abstract analytical notions of self or, as Anderson prefers, persona. He turns away from the Western notion of self, often thought to exist somehow independently of society, to examine the intersubjective reality in which Pakhtun link notions of politeness and roughness, maturity and immaturity, control and impulsiveness, to the notions of "reason" (in Arabic 'aql) and "passion" (in Arabic nafs) found throughout the Muslim world and usually expressed in terms derived from Arabic. Anderson also indicates how discourse is often about itself, and not necessarily about something perceived as external to it.

Anderson's analysis of how Pakhtun speak about the terms in which they talk aims explicitly to draw further insight from "post-structuralist" thinking brought to the anthropology of the Middle East by Michael Meeker (1976,1979). His work has stimulated others here (Betteridge, Caton, Marcus) and elsewhere (Abu-Lughod 1985). Going beyond the raw ethnographic problem of representing "other voices" to the issue of how they articulate as commentaries on and exegeses of each other provides a bridge to an approach associated with Bourdieu's concept of practice. Commentary and exegesis are as much "practices" in Bourdieu's sense of the term as are the reckoning of factors involved in a marriage or the precise significance of kin and other ties in the contingent situations of everyday conduct. Indigenous commentary and exegesis are, in fact, the source of much that passes into the anthropology of the Middle East as ethnographic data: witness the generations of normative discussions of father's brother's daughter marriages and segmentary lineage theory (Eickelman 1985a: 167–

71). One of the aims of this volume is to suggest a different perspective on the nature of such data, and how specifically it is related to the prevalent forms of analysis used in the study of Middle Eastern societies.

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#title Is There an Islamic City? The Making of a Quarter in a Moroccan Town

#author Dale F. Eickelman

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<quote>

‘...very little is known about the inner organization of quarters.’[1]

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An early version of this paper was read at the November 1972 meeting of the Middle East Studies Association in Denver. I wish to thank my colleagues Drs N. S. Hopkins, M. Guessous and especially T. O. Beidelman for comments on a later version. The Foreign Area Fellowship Program and the National Institute of Mental Health supported field research in Morocco between September 1969 and June 1970, on which part of this paper is based. All Arabic words transliterated in this paper are of colloquial Moroccan Arabic, unless indicated otherwise. A few, such as certain place names and words fairly common in European languages, are given their conventional spelling.

*** |

Max Weber’s brief remarks on the nature of the Muslim city constitute a poignant example of what Bernard Lewis describes as the unfortunate division of labor which has pervaded the study of Islam: the ‘founding fathers’ of sociology and their successors have framed theoretical statements which were either elaborated or refuted by scholars more directly concerned with the Muslim world.[2]

Weber’s neglect of the Muslim city stems in part from his formulation of the city as an ideal type. He enumerates several economic and political criteria, but sees the ‘decisive’ feature as the presence of autonomous, formally organized urban communes (Gemeinde). Oriental (including Muslim) ‘cities’ — the inverted commas are Weber’s — lack this crucial feature and hence are characterized as settlements which are cities only in an economic sense. His discussion of them serves only as a backdrop reaffirming the uniqueness to the West of cities in the full sense of the concept.[3]

This notion of the city raises the fundamental issue of whether it is a viable unit of cross-cultural comparison, since by Weber’s ideal typical definition the Muslim world has no cities. Whatever such Arabic terms as madina (‘city’) and hadariya (‘urban’, ‘civilized’, as opposed to ‘rubiya, or rural, in contemporary Morocco) may mean, they do not refer to cities in Weber’s sense.

Of course, the city can be discussed at several levels, depending on the goals of analysis. As in Weber’s case it can be an ideal typical construct specifically designed as a unit of cross-cultural comparison. Secondly, it can be a unit defined in relation to a particular religious or cultural tradition. Thus while madina and hadariya might not refer to cities in Weber’s ideal typical sense, they might be regarded as cities in the context of Muslim cultural tradition. Even in this sense the problem of an ideal type remains: if a madina is not a city, then how is it to be understood? The same problem occurs at the level where Muslim ‘cities’ are compared in terms of more specific cultural, regional or temporal variants, such as the city or town in Morocco as opposed to Syria, Indonesia or Iran, or

in seventh-century Arabia as opposed to more contemporary manifestations. In a word, nothing less than the fundamental problem of how we can ‘understand’ a cultural category is at stake, and a resolution of this problem must be made if the concept of the Muslim city is to be retained as a meaningful conceptual unit.

There are three major responses which can be made to Weber’s ideal typical construct of the city. The first is to accept the concept as it stands, perhaps elaborating its implications for the study of cities in the Islamic world.

The second is to reject it as ethnocentric, since the contours of Weber’s ideal type and the European cultural category tend to merge. If this alternative is adopted, then a more satisfactory ideal type must be formulated which (1) defines the city as a specific form of association distinct from other forms of association in the context of each cultural tradition and which (2) is amenable to comparison with the category of ‘city’ in other cultural traditions. The statement that the Muslim concept of city differs from the European concept can be meaningful only if the ideal type satisfies both criteria.

A third alternative is to deny that cities are a viable unit of cross-cultural comparison. Some concepts such as hierarchy, authority and ideas of political and economic order might be amenable to cross-cultural comparison, but perhaps the city is not. If this position is taken, then it follows that what has passed as comparative urban studies is really only the study of problems such as social and political order in settlements of high population density, which in Weber’s terms are ‘cities’ only in an economic sense. It can be argued that when Moroccans, for instance, refer to the distinction ‘urban’ and ‘rural’ (hadariyal-rubiya), this does not imply a cultural differentiation. The same assumptions towards social order are merely elaborated in settings of different complexity. It is not cities, then, which are being compared, but problems of social order in the setting of what, in our own cultural tradition, are regarded as cities.

Middle Eastern and Islamic specialists have dealt with the issue of the city in various ways. One means has tacitly side-stepped the problem by presenting

discussions by Muslim writers on the city or on urban life, regarding a gloss on these as an adequate formulation of the problem. Thus William Marcais, drawing heavily on medieval Muslim writers, saw the ‘distinctive features’ of the Muslim city as a market, a Friday mosque and possibly a bath.[4] However adequateley Marcais articulates the ideological position of Muslim writers that there is an inherent link between Islam and urban life, he fails to provide an adequate conceptualization of the city in Muslim society.[5] Settlements commonly regarded as villages often have the same features as those claimed by Marcais to distinguish cities;[6] the presence of a market never in itself constitutes an adequate defining feature;[7] and mosques can be of only peripheral significance in some Muslim contexts.[8] In sum, this style of approach does not even define the city adequately in the context of the Muslim world.

A second approach has been to accept the ideal type of the city as given by Weber and to seek defining features of the Muslim city fully analogous to the urban communes of Europe. The best-known example of this approach is Massignon’s assertion that supposedly craft and mercantile guilds were the institutional cement of Muslim cities. Since guilds were at one time important in the development of European cities, Massignon tried to read a parallel significance into what he saw as their Muslim counterparts. Perhaps ‘notorious’ would be a better characterization of this attempt, since Stern’s patient dissection of what he has called Massignon’s ‘tissue of fallacies’ and abuse of evidence involved in his argument.[9] The problem with this attempt is that careful ethnographic and social historical descriptions of Muslim cities clearly indicate that formal counterparts of urban ‘institutions’ in Europe — formal bodies or practices which have legal status — do not exist. As Roger Le Tourneau has said, Muslim cities lack institutions ‘in the proper sense of the word’.[10] The recent introduction of the concept of ‘loose structure’ is no more satisfactory a means of coping with this problem.[11]

A final approach is characterized by Ira Lapidus’ Muslim Cities in the Later Middle Ages, which discusses at length the comparative study of European and Muslim cities. Lapidus claims that he has reformulated the classical problem. Rather than concentrate primarily on one feature of town life, the presence or absence of formal institutional structures such as communes, Lapidus shifts his focus to the ‘total configuration of relationships

by which organized urban social life was carried on',[12] and seeks to compare cross-culturally this set of relationships. This 'comprehensive structure' consists of 'ties of obligation inherent in the system of relations as a whole', which govern the actual patterns of social relations in such specific domains as kinship, religion, politics and economics.[13] These ties of obligation he sees as 'institutionalized' as the formal corporate bodies of European towns. His conception of 'institution' approaches that of many contemporary social anthropologists, that of 'a pattern of behaviour which a group of persons consider "right" or "correct"'.[14] In other words Lapidus begins his comparison by discerning the culturally accepted patterns of conduct for a given society. The resulting configuration is not judged as 'loose' or 'tight' by its approximation to the European concept of city but by its ability to explain social action in the context of Muslim cities themselves.

In doing so, a subtle, crucial shift has occurred in Lapidus' argument. He effectively compares the 'system of relations as a whole' in European cities as opposed to those in their Muslim counterparts. Yet, to analyse the nature of ties of obligation in a city does not necessarily say anything about the nature of the city.[15] In Lapidus' reformulation of the classical argument the units being compared are no longer cities, but social structures and how they operate, strictly speaking, in relatively complex economic settlements. The same ties of obligation can operate in simpler rural situations as well, although Lapidus does not explore this possibility.

In this light, Weber's formulation of the problem of the city takes on more profundity. He managed to discern a form of association distinct to towns and cities in the Occident and was unable to find counterparts elsewhere. If Middle Eastern and Islamic specialists are to continue speaking of the problem of the Muslim city, then some form of association distinct to urban life in these cities must be discerned. The problem remains as to whether it is possible to isolate a feature or features which will set apart Muslim towns and cities from other units in Muslim society and make the resulting category of 'town' or 'city' comparable to that of Europe. This paper is an attempt to explore that issue, especially in relation to the nature of quarters (darb; pl. druba).[16]

Lapidus writes of the quarters that they were a ‘special field of action’, many of which were closely knit and homogeneous, although he refrains from assigning them too important a role because of the lack of knowledge of their internal organization. Le Tourneau is much less restrained in his description of Fez in 1900, and speaks of quarters as ‘fundamental units’ bound together by multiple personal links and common interests. In a free-style allusion to Durkheim he alludes to their having a ‘conscience collective’ of their own, albeit without convincing supporting ethnographic evidence or analysis.[17] If this argument could be supported, then the quarter might be seen as the distinctive feature which defines Muslim cities and makes them amenable to cross-cultural analysis.

What I will try to do in this paper is explore the cultural significance of quarters in the context of a town in Morocco. After describing the town and the assumptions of social structure which govern social relationships in it, I will analyze the role of quarters, concentrating on their internal organization. I will describe them in considerable detail since quarters seem to be a relatively unknown entity in the social history and ethnography of the Middle East. In my conclusion I will return to the question of whether it is Muslim ‘cities’ which can be compared cross-culturally or some other unit of analysis.

*** II

Today Boujad (Bja‘d\ classical Abi l-Jad) is a town of 18,000 inhabitants, about 200 kilometers to the southeast of Casablanca, nestled at the foot of the Middle Atlas mountains on the arid, rocky, upper Tadla plain. It was founded as a religious lodge (zawya) in the late sixteenth century by the marabout (mrdbit} Sidi Mhammed Sharqi (d. 1601), who like his descendants (collectively called Sharqawa), claimed descent from ‘Umar, the second caliph in Islam.[18] Descent from Sidi Mhammed Sharqi entitled 5,568 of his descendants in 1969 to a share (haqq) in the offerings (ftuhat) made at his shrine. Since most of those who claim their share live in Boujad, it continues to be something of a ‘company’ town.

Until the establishment of the French Protectorate in 1912, Boujad was the only important settlement on the Tadla plain, composed almost entirely of the Sharqawa, their slaves, their clients (including a substantial Jewish community) and refugees from various tribal groups in western Morocco.[19] From at least the seventeenth through the nineteenth centuries Boujad was considered one of the most significant religious, political and economic centers in the Moroccan interior.[20]

Unlike many of the older sections of larger Moroccan towns, Boujad is not enclosed by a fortified wall. The supernatural powers of Sharqawa marabouts were ordinarily considered sufficient protection, although most of the town was destroyed in a raid by Sultan Muhammad bin ‘Abdallah in 1784–5. When the zawya was rebuilt in the early nineteenth century, it was heavily fortified, although the rest of the town was protected only by the walls of the exterior houses and the gates between quarters. These were sealed each night until the 1930s.

Boujad continued to be a major local market for surrounding tribes although its role as a major caravan entrepot virtually ceased with the arrival of the French, whose presence eliminated the need for Sharqawa to serve as escorts (zattdts). Nevertheless the presence today of some 900 merchants and craftsmen in the town suggests the continuing importance — at least to the town — of its commercial activities. In addition, Boujad serves as a government center which includes a chief administrator (Qd’id) over Boujad and its surrounding tribes, a civil judge (hdkim\ a religious judge (Qddfy a post office, a medical clinic, and eleven primary and three secondary schools. In all, some 300 individuals work directly for the government, a sharp increase in personnel since the end of the Protectorate.

The formal religious organization of the town includes two Friday mosques, one of which was built in 1805, the other of which was built after the Second World War, primarily at the insistence of non-Sharqawa residents of ‘New Boujad’.[21] In addition there are numerous other mosques specific to various quarters. In many of these mosques are fqths who teach children the rudiments of the Qur’an. Only the largest of the mosques

and their attached personnel receive support from the Ministry of Pious Endowments (Hbas).

These ‘formal’ religious activities continue to be overshadowed by those connected with the Sharqawa marabouts, living and dead, and the zawwdrs associated with them. In spite of the significant economic and political transformations of the last sixty years, most rural tribesmen maintain ties with marabouts and visit their shrines regularly. Presently there are seventeen Sharqawa shrines in Boujad, two of the largest possessing associated mosques and hostels for pilgrims. Offerings both at the shrines and to living marabouts and zawwdrs have diminished in recent years, but continue to be a significant source of income for many Sharqawa.

*** III

Given its domination by one maraboutic descent group, Boujad is hardly the Moroccan equivalent of Middletown. It can be argued that such a situation is found in few other towns in Morocco, such as Wazzan and Mulay Idris. However, the strategy of looking for a Middletown on the basis of superficial components, a ‘lowest common denominator’ typicality, has contributed significantly to the present impasse in the study of Muslim towns.

A review of recent attempts to characterize North African society has pointed to the fact that it is not blocked out into large, well-organized permanent groupings — parties, classes, tribes, races — engaged in a long-term struggle for ascendance.

Structure after structure — family, village, clan, class, sect, army, party, elite, state — turns out, when more narrowly looked at, to be an ad hoc constellation of miniature systems of power, a cloud of unstable micropolitics, which compete, ally, gather strength, and, very soon overextended, fragment again.[22]

One reason for the difficulty in perceiving structure in North African society — and perhaps elsewhere in the Muslim world — is that most definitions of social structure are narrowly conceived to account only for situations in which groups of individuals are arranged in positions and statuses.[23] In many parts of the Islamic Middle East and elsewhere it is becoming increasingly apparent that social structure can also be conceived with individuals as the fundamental units of social structure rather than their attributes or statuses as members of groups. The ‘stable and enduring’ element in such a social structure is not the patterning of relations between individuals, which can shift rapidly and significantly, but the culturally accepted means by which individuals contract and maintain dyadic bonds and obligations with each other.[24]

This concept of social structure is implicit in the way Boujadis perceive social order and proceed to act on these assumptions. Like other Moroccans, they discriminate with considerable subtlety the variations in wealth, power, the prestige of descent, patronage and clientship, and the effectiveness with which individuals can utilize such attributes. The aggregate of influence an individual possesses with respect to others is frequently expressed in the concept of ‘word’ (kalma) and ‘face’ (wajh). The assessment of who has ‘word’ or ‘face’ is continually affected by the outcome of ongoing social actions and is never taken for granted. Given the various resources available, each individual is something of a bricoleur, viewing society less as something structured than as something capable of being restructured in such a way as to maintain or increase his own standing in it.

Persons achieve social honor on the basis of varying, experimental combinations of their attributes — wealth, political office, residence in a quarter, maraboutic descent or descent from the Prophet, etc. — in no case can the social honor of an individual be determined from an abstract knowledge of his attributes or statuses alone. Some of these statuses, such as ties of kinship, might be relatively stable, even permanent in the case of blood relations, but the obligations and expectations which individuals possess as a result of such ties are still a matter of significant variation and amenable to a wide latitude of revalorization.

For instance, possession of the attribute ‘marabout’, or claim to Sharqawa descent, will in itself say little of the social status of the individual holding it. Like other bases of status and prestige, these attributes have been revalorized significantly with the social and economic transformations which have affected Boujad over the last sixty years.

Until 1912 all significant economic, political and religious activities in Boujad and its region were dominated by Sharqawa marabouts, who acquired vast wealth and influence from those who sought their aid and intercession. Because of its value, competition for the attribute of marabout was fierce among the Sharqawa. Men who were not marabouts could rival them in certain spheres, but in general those considered marabouts had a distinct competitive advantage.

The French established a military post in Boujad in 1913 and immediately set about effecting a sharp distinction between religious and non-religious activities. Marabouts were confined to what the French determined to be their ‘proper’ religious role.[25] Although the French gave Sharqawa marabouts and their relatives prominent posts in the local native government apparatus which they established, these roles were strictly supervised. This de facto secularization had the consequence of limiting the scope of powers attributed to marabouts to matters affecting sickness and the fertility of women, crops and animals.

Non-Sharqawa townsmen in Boujad were no longer dependent upon Sharqawa marabouts for trade or commercial activities. In fact they acquired a competitive advantage over the Sharqawa since members of the administration — most leading Sharqawa-were barred from direct participation in commercial activities.[26]

These merchants, together with several tribesmen who became rural Qa’ids, rapidly sought ways to translate their economic wealth and political power into prestige. They ceased making offerings at Sharqawa shrines, and increasingly formed and joined a range of shifting factional groups which ground away at Sharqawa prestige. In the first part of the Protectorate these individuals joined local lodges of religious brotherhoods such as the Tijaniya,

Qadiriya and Kittaniya; later they formed the backbone of the nationalist movement. This group also emphasized the idea that there were no intermediaries between man and God as an ideological support for their position, an idea in sharp contradiction with their own prior beliefs and Islam as it continues to be understood by many rural Moroccans.

Sharqawa who continued to allow themselves to be regarded as marabouts or as zawwdrs increasingly had to balance the often substantial financial rewards for such activities against their diminished status honor in the eyes of many townsmen and the ‘modern’ elite. Sharqawa continue to maintain great pride in their descent, but de-emphasize their attribute of ties to marabouts in favor of attributes which presently tend to be more significant — wealth, education or political connections in Rabat.[27]

*** IV

How then is the Boujadi’s conception of quarters related to this formulation of social structure?

Like other units of society, the darb is a cultural construct which for Boujadis is not defined in terms of an ad hoc listing of formal features. These serve only as indices to the underlying cultural concept.

An earlier generation of colonial ethnographers recorded the formal arrangements of quarters and, accepting the then popular theories of Levy-Bruhl on ‘primitive’ mentalities, concluded that the evident disorder of quarters was a direct physical projection of the ‘alogical’ disorder of the ‘indigenous’ mind.[28] Lacking an adequate conception of social structure as based on culturally accepted means by which dyadic bonds between individuals are contracted and maintained, ethnographers instead sought — and failed to find — order at the level of ‘on-the-ground’ social relations and the use of physical space.

Boujadis divide their town into anything from thirty to approximately forty-three darbs[29] The differences in perception are related to what informants know of the social history of the town (which varies with generation and experience) and how they have experienced it (which varies with social position). Only those clusters of households evaluated as sustaining a particular quality of life are known as darbs\ thus some sections of the town and interstices between darbs may not be considered to form ‘real’ quarters.

Ideally the households of a darb are considered to be bound together by multiple personal ties and by common interests. These complex ties are said to symbolize qrdba, a key concept which literally means ‘closeness’. As used by urban and rural Moroccans, qrdba carries contextual meanings which range imperceptibly from asserted and recognized ties of kinship, participation in factional alliances, ties of patronage and clientship and common bonds developed out of residential propinquity. A darb can be defined as the extension of qrdba in continguous physical space. It can be said to have prestige in relation to the strength of the qrdba attributed to it by its component households and by other townsmen. Component households in a darb should be able to assume a certain moral unity so that in some respects social space in their darb can be regarded as an extension of their own household. A household can belong to only one darb but there is flexibility over time as to which darb this can be, especially among households of lesser prestige.

[[d-f-dale-f-eickelman-is-there-an-islamic-city-the-1.png]]][Figure I Boujad, 1970]]

Table I Population of principal quarters of Boujad and birthplace of adult residents[30]

| | | Birthplace of adult residents (%) |

| Darb | Total adults | Total residents | Boujad | Boujad region | Elsewhere in Morocco |

| 1. ‘Arbawa | 152 | 304 | 86 | 5 | 9 |

| 2. Zawya (c. 1850) | 286 | 572 | 64 | 19 | 17 |

| 3. Bni Makansa | 94 | 188 | 83 | 11 | 6 |

| 4. Old Sallamiyin | 215 | 430 | 64 | 26 | 10 |

| 5. New Sallamiyin (ca. 1930) | — | — | — | — | — |

| 6. Ghazawna | 136 | 272 | 75 | 14 | 11 |

| 7. ‘Allaliym | 197 | 394 | 64 | 21 | 15 |

| 8. Qadiriyin | 293 | 586 | 74 | 15 | 11 |

| 9. Qsayra | 192 | 384 | 54 | 26 | 20 |

| 10. ‘Aziziyin | — | — | — | — | — |

| 11. Grari | 73 | 146 | 67 | 23 | 10 |

| 12. Zalaghi (1900) | 119 | 238 | 62 | 24 | 14 |

| 13. ‘Aysha Haddu | — | — | — | — | — |

| 14. Hmid | 224 | 448 | 63 | 21 | 16 |

| 15. Bni Musa | 61 | 122 | 75 | 15 | 10 |

| 16. Ayt Stur | — | — | — | — | — |

| 17. Shbuki (la-Hna) | 193 | 386 | 20 | 71 | 9 |

| (post-1956) | | | | | |

| 18. Qa’id Muhammad (1950) | — | — | — | — | — |

| 19. Kahda (post-1956) | 77 | 154 | 26 | 68 | 6 |

| 20. Khaluqiyin (1935) (Smuniyin) | 159 | 318 | 66 | 25 | 9 |

| 21. Kamun (1958) | 177 | 354 | 34 | 50 | 16 |

| 22. Mimuna (post-1956) | 161 | 322 | 27 | 52 | 21 |

| 23. Warzin (i960) | 66 | 132 | 11 | 73 | 16 |

| 24. Mulay Dris (1935) | 108 | 216 | 70 | 24 | 6 |

| 25. ‘Burdal’ (1930) | — | — | — | — | — |

| 26. Gar‘a | 138 | 276 | 53 | 41 | 6 |

| 27. Ghalim | 123 | 246 | 58 | 35 | 7 |

| 28. Sa‘diyin | 28 | 56 | — | — | — |

| 29. Qtatir (1950) | 416 | 832 | 29 | 61 | 11 |

| 30. Mludi | 221 | 442 | 69 | 24 | 7 |

| 31. Sqaqi | —_ | —. | — | — | — |

| 32. Dwar l-Mkhazniya (1950) | 19 | 38 | — | — | — |

| 33. Fridiyat (post-1956) | 285 | 570 | 44 | 45 | 11 |

| 34. Khuribga | 63 | 126 | 73 | 19 | 8 |

| 35. Sanya | 141 | 282 | 40 | 40 | 20 |

| 36. Sultan (Drawsh) (1950) | 78 | 156 | 40 | 18 | 42 |

| 37. Bni Maskin | 97 | 194 | 74 | 19 | 6 |

| 38. Hasan | 44 | 88 | — | — | — |

| 39. Nwasir | 133 | 266 | 66 | 14 | 20 |

| 40. Kawwasha | 48 | 96 | — | — | — |

| 41. Jdid | 59 | 118 | 44 | 49 | 7 |

| 42. ‘Amir | 68 | 136 | 44 | 38 | 18 |

| 43. Sidi l-Hafyan | 103 | 206 | 49 | 39 | 13 |

| 44. Biru (government offices and official residences) |

Qrdba in a quarter — just as between kinsmen, factional allies and patrons and clients, in towns or elsewhere — can be symbolized by the exchange of visits on feast days and on other occasions, by assistance and participation in the activities connected with births, circumcisions, weddings and funerals, graduation from school or memorization of the Qur’an. The heads of household of a darb (mzoalin id-darb) share certain minimal collective responsibilities: they often construct and maintain a

mosque, hire a fqih (Qur’anic teacher) for it, and congregate in it the night of Laylat l-Qadr (the 27th of Ramadan), when they will listen to the recitation of the Qur’an until sunrise. They may also hire a night watchman (‘assas).

Because of the multiple ties of its residents, respectable women who never venture to the main market can circulate discreetly within their darb, where the households are ‘known’ (ma’ruf) to each other. For this reason, darb residents are concerned with any scandal which may affect their own reputation and may occasionally try to force the departure of undesirable households or individuals.

While qrdba carries a range of meanings, it is often expressed in terms of kinship ties, especially those of blood since they symbolize bonds which, however they are valorized, are permanent and cannot be broken. Most darbs have a cluster of households which claim relation to each other in this way.

Even when qrdba is maintained by closely overlapping ties of residential propinquity and kinship, as in certain Sharqawa quarters, informants emphasize that the obligations between individuals are not fixed. There is an existential realism towards ‘the way things are’ (had sh-sln Ui kayri), which permeates their conception of social order. Thus one elderly Sharqawi illustrated as follows the flexibility of alliances in blood feuds involving his quarter prior to the Protectorate:

How can you say that it was always your brothers or your father’s brother’s sons who would help you in a fight? They might live far from you, and besides they have their own household and affairs to look after. Why should they risk their lives for you as well?[31]

Individuals ‘close’ (qrib) to you, he continued, were those who acted as if they were.

For qrdba to be said to exist in a darb, it must be capable of mobilizing for effective social action in some contexts. An external parameter here can be noted. Most darbs are composed of 200–600 inhabitants, with about one-fourth of this number being adult males.[32] Darbs considerably smaller or larger than the norm tend to be the ones which are not regarded as darbs by all informants. Such a guide is very rough, but suggests that for bonds of qrdba to be effective in terms of physical propinquity, there is an optimal range, above and below which such ties become untenable.[33]

In addition each darb has one or several ‘big men’ (kubbdr), or men with ‘word’ (kalma) who in some contexts act for the common interests of the darb or who can mobilize households within it. Darbs lacking individuals with ‘word’ are often incapable of mobilization and are those regarded by many as not being darbs at all.

Residential areas with a high proportion of rural immigrants are generally those said to lack qrdba. These immigrants settle wherever there is suitable accommodation for rent, rather than cluster by origin, and have a tendency to move frequently. Residents of such areas are said to be ‘unknown’ to each other, even if they consider themselves a darb. Generally they are unable to mobilize as an effective group since they lack the economic resources and leadership to establish such signs of prestige as a darb mosque. Since no one in them has ‘word’, such quarters tend to be the last to acquire urban amenities such as sewers, water and paved passages or (for the ‘new’ quarters) roads.

Given the past competitive advantages of many Sharqawa, including education as fils de notable in the early days of the Protectorate and preferment in official positions, many, especially in darbs ‘Arbawa and Zawya, have been able to maintain local and even national prominence by converting the waning power of maraboutism into assets more viable in altered social and economic conditions. This is reflected by the continuing existence and prestige of

several (not all) Sharqawa darbs over the last sixty years, especially those of darbs ‘Arbawa and Zawya, inhabited respectively by descendants of Sidi l-Hajj l-‘Arabi (d. 1819) and Sidi bin Dawd l-Kbir (d. 1889), the two most prominent marabouts of the last 150 years. In these darbs more than others the ties of residence, faction and descent tend to coincide, although these identities are still amenable to considerable manipulation. Many residents hold rights in the undivided estates of their maraboutic ancestors in addition to shares of offerings to the main shrines. Both quarters can point to numerous occasions in the recent past when effective alliances have been formed on a *darb*-wide basis.

Sharqawa and other quarters unable to maintain such prestige are liable to dissociation — since World War II, prosperous Sharqawa merchants in some of these quarters have moved to ‘new’ Boujad and have downplayed their Sharqawa identity. Rural immigrants moving into such quarters then try to claim Sharqawa descent as one means of upgrading their own prestige. Not infrequently, entire quarters disappear over relatively brief spans of time, as a consequence of this process.[34]

In contrast, there are a number of darbs formed over the last few decades which now attempt to claim prestige equal or superior to those of the Sharqawa. Darb Khalluqiyin has at its core the sons of a non-Sharqawa merchant who before and after the Protectorate engaged in trade with Khnifra, in the Middle Atlas highlands. His sons became prosperous merchants and early in the 1930s purchased adjoining plots in the original rectangular lotissement designed by the French for ‘New Boujad’. Later two of the brothers became active in nationalist politics and, publicly at least, the leaders of rival factions. Most residents claim links with the core households. These, in turn, have begun to claim descent from ‘Ali Smuni, a ‘forgotten’ brother of Sidi Mhammad Sharqi who, unlike the marabout, was a ‘progressive’ ahead of his time! Thus they claim the prestige of distinguished ancestry without its supposed encumbrances. Darbs founded by rural Qa’ids during the Protectorate had a similar rapid ascendancy.

*** V

The rise and fall of quarters is related to their ability to sustain qrdba based at least in part upon residential association. This section will outline the mechanics by which the claim to qrdba was made in one darb. The following section will illustrate how this qrdba was legitimized and defended in the context of social action.

Darb l-Qsayra, ‘The Little Fortress’, is so named because it adjoins the fortified, high-walled Sharqawa religious lodge which forms the nucleus of Darb iz-Zawya, and looks like a scaled-down version of it.

L-Qsayra’s residents tend to claim ‘closeness’ to each other by descent and marriage although, as is also the case for Sharqawa darbs, the exact genealogical links cannot be demonstrated. Most residents of the darb claim that they or their ancestors came from Ayt Salih, the tribal ‘fraction’ (to use French administrative nomenclature) to the immediate west of Boujad. Without denying Ayt Salih origins, others prefer to stress their relations with one Hajj Bu Bakr, himself reputedly of Ayt Salih, who founded the darb at the turn of the century and whose household serves as the ‘core’ with which other households claim affinity.

Bu Bakr was a tannery owner and grain merchant around the time when the French arrived in 1913. Not long after this event, he made a fortune by selling grain in exchange for land and houses during a period of extensive drought.[35] His fortune made, Bu Bakr converted it into social honor by making the pilgrimage to Mecca and acquiring the title Hajj. He constructed an imposing house for himself and acquired an additional wife. As his sons matured and married he built adjacent houses for them in the manner of other men of wealth. He also constructed a small mosque in the quarter and made the major contribution towards bringing a fqih to teach in it. He died shortly after World War II, although his sons and widows continue to reside in the quarter.

The means by which ‘closeness’ is claimed with Hajj Bu Bakr by residents of the darb deserve some attention. There are some thirty households in the darb, although when I asked informants to enumerate them for me they invariably excluded several. These turned out to be the poorest ones or living units which somehow did not qualify as households (e.g., men sleeping in shops, and poor, childless couples). These latter did not share the visiting patterns of the ‘counted’ households of the darb or engage in their multiple reciprocal exchanges.

The asserted ties of one informant will be examined in detail since they orchestrate virtually the entire range of means by which ‘closeness’ can be asserted. At first Ma‘ti (i),[36] a shopkeeper who had attended the local college, claimed that Bu Bakr was ‘of his blood’ (min darnmi). This he elaborated by claiming that the relation was through his father’s brother (3) [szc], who married a woman of Hajj Bu Bakr’s household.

[[[[d-f-dale-f-eickelman-is-there-an-islamic-city-the-2.jpg][Figure 2 Kinship ties of an informant in Darb l-Qsayra]]

In another context some months earlier I had asked Ma‘ti to tell me whom he considered his kinsmen, so that I had a means of checking his statements. When I reminded him that previously he said his father had no brothers, he replied that since he was ‘close’ (qrlb) to Hajj Bu Bakr, then it must be through a halfbrother of his father that he never met or perhaps through his grandfather (5)! In other words ‘closeness’ came first, then its ideological justification. He continued that there ‘probably’ was a second link through the marriage of his mother’s sister (4), who also lived in Qsayra. Again this tie could not be demonstrated. Finally Ma‘ti said that Bu Bakr’s people act as if (b-hdl) they are related (qrib\ so they must be, and cited at length the informal visiting patterns which prevailed between their households. No one can remember such ties clearly, he said; and since — in perfectly comprehensible Catch-22 reasoning — no one could verify them in any exact way, they must exist. He went on to link himself in a similar manner with a minor, but significant, local government official who figures prominently in the ‘Great Shrine Incident’ which is discussed in the following section.[37]

*** VI

The perseverance of a darb or other group is contingent upon its effectiveness in ongoing social situations. Ties of kinship, occupation and residence, among others, may form the base of active alliances. The emphasis placed on these ties will vary with the situations in which they are used.

For many years residents of Darb l-Qsayra regarded themselves as a darb and were seen as such by other townsmen. Only after an incident in 1969 which involved effective collective action on the basis of darb identity was it commonly regarded as a darb of high prestige. This event, which I have called ‘The Great Shrine Incident’, shifted the boundaries of commonly accepted social categories by legitimizing the fusion of residence and kinship claimed by residents of the darb and did so by effectively challenging the Sharqawa prerogative of building shrines for their ancestors.

The ‘Great Shrine Incident’ began with the death in France of a man called ‘Sharqawi’, an artist who had emigrated to France some years earlier. Informants from Darb l-Qsayra claimed that despite his name he was not a Sharqawi but of ‘their blood’. Moroccan friends of the artist in France had his body returned to Boujad, where at first it was placed in the common cemetery. When some of them later visited Boujad, they left money for a more ‘fitting’ memorial with a minor local official who was a resident of l-Qsayra. He quickly consulted with other residents of the darb — it is significant that he chose to pursue action along its lines rather than some other — and decided to erect a shrine (qubba) for the artist. As one Qsayra resident later said: ‘After all, he was like (b-hdl) a saint (wall). I don’t say he is, but how else do you distinguish a man except by building a shrine over his head?’

All informants agreed that it takes more than the construction of a shrine to make a marabout, but all shrines are regarded nevertheless as those of marabouts:

After you die [said another supporter of the shrine] your sons begin talking about how great you are and build a shrine over your head. Then they say that you have a high rank (daraja kbira) with God. Some people visit the shrine, kiss it and ask for things. However those that ask the most are the descendants of the shaykh (i.e., the person in the shrine). They ask for animals and grain from the pilgrims. Then as the descendants of the shaykh increase in number, some continue to collect gifts and intercede with their ancestor, others become merchants and teachers and so on. That’s all there is to it.

For residents of Darb l-Qsayra, support for construction of the tomb was a means of upgrading their own social honor since a shrine would allow them to point to an ‘exemplary’ ancestor in the manner of the Sharqawa and, moreover, distinguish them from other commoners. A successful mobilization against the Sharqawa would effectively validate their claim to ‘closeness’.

The local official from l-Qsayra managed to supplement the initial contribution with funds from the municipal treasury on the grounds that the artist was an international figure and that the construction of a tomb for him would enhance Boujad as a tourist attraction. The site chosen was a promontory to the immediate north of the town, next to the main highway, where there already were five shrines for the sons of Sidi Mhammad Sharqi. A construction permit was obtained from the Qa’id and a delegation from l-Qsayra went to Rabat informally to see a well-placed Sharqawi, who raised no objections.[38]

Municipal work crews were used and by the end of the summer of 1969 construction of the shrine was almost completed. In fact, pilgrims began making small offerings despite the attempts of Sharqawa who collected offerings at the adjoining shrines to stop them.

By now, a few Sharqawa became concerned. As one of the active opponents of Darb l-Qsayra later said, if the shrine was allowed to be completed, then anyone could claim that they, too, were descendants of Sidi Mhammed Sharqi. The ‘real’ Sharqawa would lose ‘word’ by an inability to act effectively, and at least some stood the loss of income from pilgrims.

The first men with ‘word’ to act were two Sharqawa notaries (‘adis) from the prominent ‘Arbawa darb. Both were active in overseeing the collection and distribution of offerings at the main shrine and regularly emerged as spokesmen (mqaddams) for Sharqawa interests.

They tried to halt construction of the new shrine first by asking the local Qa’id, not native to the region, to intervene. He refused (the local official from l-Qsayra was one of his close collaborators), on the grounds that the matter was internal to the Sharqawa and that the Makhzan was not about to intervene in their ‘family’ affairs.[39] The regional overseer {Nadir) of the Ministry of Pious Endowments (Hbds), an early supporter of the Istiqlal party, also declined to intervene, arguing quite correctly that, since the Sharqawa shrines were not among his holdings, the matter was extraneous to his office. The next move of the notaries was to prepare a petition in the name of ‘all’ Sharqawa, only to find that because of several recent, and some not so recent, disputes among Sharqawa, there was considerable resistance to its signing. Clearly, social action did not coalesce along simple, arbitrary lines of kinship or residence, but depended upon each individual weighing the various alternatives for action open to him.

Eventually some sixty signatures were collected for the petition. Significantly the most influential of the signers were prosperous Sharqawa merchants who had resided for years in Casablanca and thus were removed from local factional alliances.

Armed with their petition, the two notaries went first to a Minister in Rabat. According to one of those present at the interview, his reply was markedly unsympathetic. ‘Once dead all Muslims are equal’ [szc], he replied, and

would have nothing to do with the prerogatives claimed by a maraboutic descent group. The notaries tried to argue that the shrines were ‘historical’, not ‘religious’, monuments, but this also fell on deaf ears.

The next visit, to an influential private individual, was more successful. A single telephone call was placed to the Qa’id of Boujad, who immediately rode out to the shrine and forbade further work on it. Informants from both sides of the dispute stressed that the formal arguments presented by both sides were immaterial. Someone with influence had acted.

Supporters of the shrine from Darb l-Qsayra congratulated themselves that it took months for a mere stalemate to be effected against them — the nearly completed shrine was left standing — and regarded their setback as temporary : We will stay quiet for a few years, and then start building again. By then even the Sharqawa will forget whether ‘Sharqawi’ is a descendant of Sidi Mhammad Sharqi or not, and will only remember his name.

It would be misleading to interpret this incident primarily in terms of the successful attempt of non-marabouts to acquire for themselves the symbols of maraboutic prestige. This would be perhaps too ‘traditional’ a view of ‘traditional’ Morocco in the light of the frequency of such occurrences in the past.[40] More to the point is the fact that a successful alliance was formed along the lines of residence, was sustained and thus legitimized the assertion of darb ‘closeness’ as a social reality.

*** VII

The question posed by this paper was whether the darb is a form of association distinct to urban life. The analysis of this study suggests for the case of Morocco that it is not. Instead, the darb is related to the cultural category of qrdba, To use a crude metaphor, the concept of ‘closeness’ and its relation with darbs can be compared with a slide as it is projected against objects of various forms. An analyst seeking to discern order between the shapes of the reflected images (either different darbs, or darbs

and kinship, patron-client ties and the like) will be less successful than one with a knowledge of optics and the original slide. The metaphor is crude because it is incomplete: it does not account for the fact that the cultural categories such as qrdba are not static either, but are affected in turn by the situations in which they are used to discern order.

This latter qualification is particularly important for what Weber punctiliously called the ‘cities in the economic sense’ of the Muslim world. Attempts have been made in Morocco (and elsewhere) to impose municipal institutions and other institutional forms which fit awkwardly with the cultural assumptions which Moroccans make about the workings of social order. Secondly, the rate of urbanization has accelerated so rapidly in the last half-century that the sheer quantitative increase in urban populations may provoke situations which will test to the limits the sociological situations in which qrdba can provide Moroccans with meaningful representations of reality.

Such a problem is not that of the ‘city’ in a cultural sense. As with Marc Bloch’s Feudal Society, what is involved is first the study of the nature of social networks and the cultural assumptions through which they are perceived. These must be seen in a perspective larger than that of urban agglomerations — at the level of nations as well as that of the rural hinterland.

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[1] Ira Lapidus, Muslim Cities in the Later Middle Ages (Cambridge, 1967), p. 91.

[2] Bernard Lewis, ‘The Study of Islam’, Encounter, vol. xxxvii (January, 1972), p. 38.

[3] Max Weber, Economy and Society, ed. Guenther Roth and Claus Wittich (New York, 1968), pp. 1212–36, esp. 1226, 1233. A similar formulation of the problem of the study of the city was provided by Fustel de Coulanges for French scholarship, although not with a similar degree of methodological awareness. The Ancient City (New York, n.d. [orig. 1864]) was directly concerned only with the evolution of forms of urban society in ancient Greece and Rome, but Fustel's developmental sequence was implicitly taken up as a microcosm of urban development — or the lack of it — elsewhere, such as in early French studies of the city in North Africa.

[4] 'L'Islamisme et la vie urbaine', Comptes Rendus de VAcademic des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres (1928), pp. 86–100, esp. pp. 95–7.

[5] Von Grunebaum shows acute awareness of the comparative problem in his writings, but his contributions reflect the same difficulties. See his Islam: Essays in the Nature and Growth of a Cultural Tradition, 2nd ed. (London, 1961), pp. 141–58, and 'The Sacred Character of Islamic Cities', in A. Badawi (ed.), Melanges Taha Husain (Cairo, 1962), PP. 25–37.

[6] See Jacques Berque, 'Medinas, villeneuves et bidonvilles', Les Cahiers de Tunisie, vol. VI (1958), pp. 12–13.

[7] Weber, Economy and Society, p. 1213.

[8] For example, Nur Yalman, 'Islamic reform and the mystic tradition in eastern Turkey', Archiv. Europ. Sociol., vol. x (1969), p. 50.

[9] S. M. Stern, 'The constitution of the Islamic city', in A. H. Hourani and S. M. Stern (eds.), The Islamic City (Oxford, 1970), pp. 37, 42. Cf. Weber, Economy and Society, pp. 1343–9. It is ironical to note that the craft and commercial guilds in the Moroccan town on which this study is based were founded by the French in the late 1920s, according to the older amins. Since many of them were moribund from the

start, it could be argued that the colonial power defined for the Muslims the components of a ‘real’ Muslim town and supplied the missing parts when their image of reality was incongruent with what they found.

[10] La Vie quotidienne a Fes en igoo (Paris, 1965), p. 43; Gabriel Baer, Studies in the Social History of Modern Egypt (Chicago, 1969), pp. 190–209.

[11] For example, Stern, ‘Constitution’, p. 26.

[12] Lapidus, Muslim Cities, p. 3.

[13] Ibid., pp. 186–7.

[14] Lloyd A. Fallers, Bantu Bureaucracy (Chicago, 1965), p. 3.

[15] Muslim Cities, pp. 91, 154.

[16] In this article I have translated darb as ‘quarter’. This follows Boujad usage and — in Boujad — is coterminous with the rarely heard term hawma. In some cities in Morocco, such as Fes, the terms carry different meanings. Darb refers to an impasse or small street, while hawma (which can be composed of several darbs} refers to ‘quarter’. I point out this variation to avoid possible misunderstanding.

[17] ‘Un quartier se formait une conscience collective qui n’etait pas forcement la meme que celle du petit quartier voisin’, La Vie quotidienne, p. 53.

[18] On the Tadla, Dukkala and Shawya plains of western Morocco an individual claiming descent from ‘Umar is often called a fqir (pl. fuqara), an attribute as familar there as the more generally known claims to descent from the Prophet Muhammad and relation to the reigning Moroccan dynasty (shrif’, pl. shurafa}. On descent from ‘Umar, see Muhammad al-Qadiri, Nachr al-Mathani (Paris, 1913), pp. 127–9. There is an overlapping between the categories of descent from Muhammad or ‘Umar and that of being a marabout. A marabout is a person, living or dead, attributed with a special relationship with God and an ability to control the flow of, or to convey, divine grace (baraka}. In principle, some informants say that marabouts need not be descendants of the Prophet or of ‘Umar, although in practice marabouts are attributed with such descent.

At present only two living Sharqawa are attributed with the quality of marabout by large numbers of predominantly rural tribesmen, although a larger number of Sharqawa, called ‘visitors’ (zaww&r, pl. zwawir) have reputations as particularly effective intercessors with their maraboutic relations living and dead.

[19] Boujad’s population in 1880 was about 1,700, of which 200 were Jews. In 1926, of 8,879 inhabitants, 1,010 were Jews and 138 were Europeans — almost all administrators and merchants, since the mediocre agricultural lands surrounding Boujad attracted virtually no colons. From the 1930s onwards surrounding towns with more economic potential grew rapidly in size, while Boujad’s population levelled off except for sharp declines in its Jewish and European components. There were only 336 Jews remaining in 1956, the year of Independence. Only one household remained in 1969. Most of the Europeans departed shortly after Independence. Presently only a small group of secondary school teachers on temporary assignments remain. All population figures are from the archives of the Annexe de Boujad, except those of 1880, which are from Charles de Foucauld, Reconnaissance au Maroc (Paris, 1939), p. 125.

[20] al-Nasiri, Kitab al-Istiqsa, tr. Eugene Fumey, vol. 1 (Paris, 1906), pp. 346–7; Foucauld, Reconnaissance, p. 121; E. Levi-Provencal, Les Historiens des Chorfa (Paris, 1922), pp. 297–8.

[21] New Boujad (Bja‘d J did) is the ‘native’ housing scheme initiated by the French in the 1930s. The original part is the orderly, rectangular grid closest to the old madina (see map). Most of the other accretions are the result of post-Independence expansion.

[22] Clifford Geertz, ‘In Search of North Africa’, New York Review of Books (22 April 1971), p. 20. See also his review of John Waterbury, Commander of the Faithful, Middle Eastern Studies, vol. vn (1971), pp. 254–5, for comments on the misapplication of ‘segmentary’ models of social organization to North Africa. In a similar vein, Jacques Berque, in Jean and Simonne Lacouture, Le Maroc a Vepreuve (Paris, 1958), p. 80, has characterized the diversity in the forms of Moroccan towns and villages and other ‘surface’ units of society as ‘petits monstres d’ingeniosite sociale’ because of their lack of comparability.

[23] For example, Victor W. Turner, The Ritual Process (Chicago, 1969), pp. 125–6.

[24] For a similar formulation based on work elsewhere in Morocco, see Lawrence Rosen, ‘The Social Structure of a Moroccan Town’ (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Chicago, 1968), esp. p. 68, and in several publications now in the press. This formulation also seems compatible with James A. Bill’s discussion of the Iranian dawrah in ‘The Plasticity of Informal Politics: the Case of Iran’, paper read at a Conference on the Structure of Power in Islamic Iran, U.C.L.A., 1969. One of the few social anthropologists to have paid attention to this type of social structure situation is Lloyd A. Fallers. See his ‘Despotism, Status Culture and Social Mobility in an African Kingdom Comparative Studies in Society and History, vol. 11 (1959), pp. 23, 29.

[25] Claude d’Escorcheville, Controleur Civil of Boujad, 1934–8, untitled monograph on the Sharqawa, written c. 1938. Typescript, p. 119.

[26] Further, relatives of prominent figures in religious brotherhoods (tariqas) were not allowed to acquire foreign patents of protection. These were invaluable in commercial activities early in the Protectorate. See Archives, Annexe de Boujad, T. Steeg to Commandant of Meknes region, 25/D (23 March 1928). French colonial cosmography curiously considered the Sharq awa descent group as a confrerie, which Moroccans never did.

[27] I say ‘tend to be’ since being a marabout was a significant factor in an election in the early 1960s, when a Sharqawi candidate won with the support of rural tribesmen who regarded his close kinsman as a marabout.

[28] For example, Louis Brunot, in Georges Hardy, UAme marocaine d’apres la litterature frangaise (Paris, 1926), p. 20.

[29] The approximate locations of these quarters are indicated on Fig. 1. Numbers on the map are keyed to Table 1. I wish to thank John Kirchner for preparation of the base map, and the Center for Middle Eastern Studies of the University of Chicago for a grant towards its preparation. At times darbs are coterminous with narrow impasses, but in general are composed of a number of contiguous impasses which cannot be discerned by physical inspection alone. This is even more apparent in the rectangular grid of ‘New Boujad’. Cf. Albert de Boucheman, Une petite cite caravaniere: Suhne (Damascus, 1937), where the author provides an aerial photograph of the settlement together with a transparent overleaf indicating its division into quarters. While a few features such as caravanserais can be identified without the overleaf, the lines between quarters cannot.

[30] These figures are based on the registration forms for the 1963 municipal elections. An ‘adult’ is defined for electoral purposes as an individual 21 years of age or older.

The estimate for total residents of each quarter is based on the fact that 47% of Morocco’s population was under 15 years of age in i960. See

Andre Tiano, Le deweloppement economique du Maghreb (Paris, 1968), p. 6.

Sharqawa quarters are italicized. Identification numbers of quarters established prior to the Protectorate are in italic type.

For Boujad as a whole, 54% of the residents of the town were born there, 35 % came from surrounding rural areas and the remaining 11 % came from other parts of Morocco.

[31] He also made the same point using the concept of hbab, which literally means ‘loved ones’, but which often is used to refer to blood relations. When necessary for context such terms can be more strictly delimited. For example, Boujadis speak of some individuals being qrab or hbab bish-shr’a, to indicate who are kinsmen within the definitions of Islamic laws concerning marriage and inheritance. In many respects qrdba in present-day Morocco resembles the concept of ‘asabiya presented over 500 years earlier by Ibn Khaldun. Ibn Khaldun is particularly good at indicating the multiple bases on which ‘asabiya can be based among both townsmen and tribesman, but ultimately opts for the ideological position that the ‘naturalness’ of blood ties makes them superior to the others. Urban and rural Moroccans of today will make the same point. How these are articulated in practice is another matter, as my text indicates. See The Muqaddimah, trans. Franz Rosenthal, vol. 1, and ed. (Princeton, 1967), pp. 249–310, esp. p. 264.

[32] See Table 1. Cf. Lapidus, Muslim Cities, p. 85, where he estimates the average size of quarters in medieval Damascus at 500–600 inhabitants.

[33] A further confirmation of this possibility is the fact that rural dwars (villages or semi-nomadic pastoral groups) in the Boujad region have a similar population range. These groups also claim affiliation on the basis of qrdba. The range of possibilities in which dyadic

ties may be contracted generally tends to be more limited for tribesmen as opposed to townsmen, but they show the same flexibility as the pattern I am outlining for the town. Dzuars tend to coalesce and disappear the same way as urban darbs. This is not to say, as has been suggested elsewhere in the Muslim world, that urban quarters are to be understood as ‘continuations’ of rural or tribal practices, or of adaptations of them to town life. At least for Morocco it is more accurate to say that the similarity occurs because both townsmen and tribesmen share the same cultural assumptions towards social order.

[34] As an example of this dissociation in a Sharqawa quarter, there was a quarter which claimed as eponymal ancestor Sidi l-Mursli, a son of the founding marabout. It was located next to the shrine of Sidi Mhammad Sharqi. Presently it is remembered only by the oldest Boujadis, although descendants of this marabout are still in Boujad and entitled to a share of offerings to the shrine. The residences of Jews followed a similar pattern. Prior to the Protectorate there was no mallah properly speaking. Jews clustered around three prominent Jewish households in different parts of Boujad. The darb in which there was the synagogue was called the mallah. When all but one Jewish household departed in 1963 and the synagogue was deconsecrated, the ex-Jewish quarter quickly became known as part of Darb l-Qadiriyin, the Sharqawa quarter which encompassed it. A more dramatic indication of these shifts is the difficulty which local officials have in using an administrative map prepared by the French in the 1930s, which still is supposed to be employed for governmental purposes. Many of the boundaries have shifted and several names are unidentifiable. Although these labels are supposed to be used for such things as election registration, officials admit that they are unable to follow it and instead use the nomenclature ‘which everyone knows’.

[35] Names and minor details in this account have been altered. In recounting this episode informants regarded this turn of fortune as a sign of God’s favor to Bu Bakr and attached no adverse connotations to his behavior.

[36] Numbers in parentheses refer to Figure 2.

[37] A brother of Mali’s, actively seeking a government post, indicates how the same calculations of ‘closeness’ act in other contexts. He told me that his wald‘amm (FaBroSo), a government clerk in Rabat, was helping him in the matter. In this case, the actual link (i.e., by shr’a) was known. He claimed as wald ‘amm his ‘sister’s husband’s mother’s sister’s son’ (wald khut umm rajil khuti) or — since both one of his brothers and his sister married into the same household — his ‘brother’s wife’s mother’s sister’s son’. Again the justification offered for using the term wald’amm was the quality of ‘closeness’ claimed to exist between the two individuals.

[38] This move indicated, of course, a sensitivity to informal constellations of power as opposed to the formal distribution of authority.

[39] This position had precedents. Early in the Protectorate the French developed a policy of avoiding intervention in Sharqawa affairs, alternatively with the justifications that such matters were either ‘religious’ or ‘familial’. (Personal communication from Claude d’Escorcheville, 1970.)

[40] For example, Alfred Bel, La Religion musulmane en Berberie (Paris, 1938), pp. 376–82.

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<quote>

There are decades when nothing happens, but there are weeks when decades happen.

Attributed to V. I. Lenin

</quote>

The new communications media are transforming what it means to be part of the global Muslim community (ummah) and the meaning of home. The ‘Arab Spring’ of 2011 is a visible and dramatic manifestation of changes in ideas of person and society that have been underway for well over two decades. Like many great transformations, the cumulative effect of shifts in the role of media in society are more visible in retrospect than when first introduced.

The term ‘Arab Spring’ is an analogy borrowed directly from its 1968 antecedent. The ‘Prague Spring’ began in January of that year, and the Soviet military occupation crushed it in August. The ‘Arab Spring’ of more than 40 years later may also be reversible — at least in some countries and in the short term. Nonetheless, as Claude Levi-Strauss might have said, the analogy is good to think with (bon d penser). It suggests a family resemblance that spans historical epochs and reaffirms the importance of considering the rapidly shifting role of the new media and their implications for religion and community.

The ‘Arab Spring’ is occurring in the context of several key factors. For the Arab Middle East and North Africa, 60 percent of the population is under 30

years old. In spite of declining birth rates since 2000, the proportion of under- 305 in the region’s population will remain high for at least another decade (Silatech 2009: 13). This population is under- or unemployed. Emigration has ceased to be the safety valve that it was in an earlier era, and in the states rich in natural resources, meaningful employment remains increasingly in short supply. Second, the region is much better schooled. Since the mid-twentieth century, access to secondary and post-secondary education has steadily risen throughout the region. Mass higher education has enabled large numbers of people to talk back in public to the political elite, or at least to imagine and articulate alternate social and political realities (Eickelman 1992). Third is the greater accessibility of the new media. Mobile telephones and computer use is now ubiquitous, and the ways in which people can create networks of belonging have multiplied. Yet the new media do not merely project reality, they become what Manuel Castells (1996) has famously called ‘real virtuality’, in which digital images become not just a channel through which the appearance of reality is communicated, but the experience itself.

*** The personal dimension

My direct personal experiences with Middle Eastern and North African media began in 1966 with my first visit to the region. That summer, Cairo became almost silent when Umm Kulthum sang on state television, followed by a speech by Gamal cAbd al-Nasser. Again in Cairo in 1966 in Roxy, the mixed Coptic/Muslim quarter, the evening outdoor cinema in a vacant lot was a good for my Arabic. Few people had televisions, but most evenings the cinema offered old black and white Egyptian films, with any fez in the film rubbed out with censor’s ink. The fast-paced dialogue was too difficult for me, but a neighboring photographer, a refugee from Port Said, gave me a stepped-down basic translation that I could understand. Younger members of the audience, familiar with the film, talked back to it. Television in private homes and cafes long ago replaced the impromptu cinema of the quarter or village.

Also in September 1968, villagers in cAfaq in southern Iraq, regularly sat in a cafe midday listening to a literate sayh read from the daily newspaper. Rural Moroccans in early 1969 occasionally asked me to translate

the ‘radio’ Arabic of the main midday newscast into colloquial Arabic. These time-bound images now belong to the past, replaced today by near-ubiquitous cell phones, pervasive satellite channels, and in most cases a greater ease of travel or at least transnational connections to friends and family.

Since the late 1940s, the older model of Oriental studies based primarily on texts was gradually replaced by the more open structure of text- and context-based Islamic and area studies (Eickelman et al. 2011). Many aspire for area studies to realize their potential as complementary to the core academic disciplines including history, anthropology, sociology, and the emerging field of media studies. As member of a selection committee for fellowship proposals at a major foundation in the early 1980s, I recall that social science referees from some U.S. universities justified their candidate’s lack of knowledge of Middle Eastern languages as inconsequential. In their view, languages and even history were just a tool that could be picked up on arrival for field research.

Although this argument is not posed in equally stark terms today, this attitude has not entirely gone away. In some academic fields, however, the convergence of established disciplines and area studies is more pervasive. The conference in Berlin at which an earlier version of this article was presented in 20IO[1] shows the benefits of dissolving the ‘great divide’ between the social sciences and Islamic studies. It is hard to imagine what a study of contemporary Islamic discourse or the importance of language would look like devoid of attention to language and socio-historical contexts.

The ‘old eras’ of both ‘Oriental’ and ‘area’ studies was more time- and context-sensitive than contemporary invocations of them allow. In the American context, Ford Foundation funding led to the creation of the Foreign Area Fellowship Program (1950–1966), jointly administered by the Social Science Research Council (SSRC) and the American Council of Learned Societies (ACLS). In 1957, the ACLS-SSRC private initiative was followed by the U.S. National Defense Education Act, Title VI of which was devoted to international area studies and remains active, albeit with reduced funding.

The Foreign Area Fellowship Program initiative was as powerful in reshaping international education in the 1950s as was a MacArthur Foundation initiative, begun in 1984, to reshape international peace and security studies with a similar reconfiguration of academic and policy fields. In the late 1980s, a MacArthur Foundation director told me that the foundation put more money into reconfiguring security studies in the U.S. than all other government and private programs combined. Largely as a result of this initiative, climate change, shifting demographics, epidemics, nanotechnology, and even my field — characterized in policy circles as 'language and culture' (Eickelman 2009) — began being seen as necessary components to thinking about security issues.

Some of the new dynamics of area studies has come from outside Europe and North America. A succession of inter-university Islamic and area studies programs launched in Japan in the late 1980s gave a powerful boost to international area studies in that country and beyond and served as a model for interuniversity cooperation among Japanese universities in the humanities and social sciences. Other initiatives such as the Institute for the Study of Islam in the Modern World (ISIM, 1998–2008) in Leiden showed both the strengths and precariousness of combining language and area studies with disciplines; its life span was only a decade. The Berlin Graduate School Muslim Cultures and Societies ([[http://www.bgsmcs.fu-berlin.de] [www.bgsmcs.fu-berlin.de]]), founded in 2007 and operational in 2008, brings together several leading Berlin-area universities and research institutions and integrates disciplinary with area studies. At the other end of the continuum was the U.S. Social Science Research Council. Not long after the end of the Cold War in 1991, the SSRC abolished its long-standing area studies committees. This dissolution reflected the triumph, at least for the short term, of 'rational choice' theorists in international studies. Just like early modernization theory in the mid-twentieth century, a one-size-fits-all rational choice theory appeared conveniently to explain all that needed to be known about global developments without significant reference to language and culture (Eickelman 2000). 'Rational choice' theory, predominant in economics, assumes that individuals use the most cost-effective means of achieving a goal regardless of its worthiness. Thus any study of cultural values or historical understandings is immaterial. As one rational choice theorist (cited in Cumings 1997) famously said at the time, "why do you need to know Japanese or anything about Japan's history and culture if the

methods of rational choice will explain why Japanese politicians and bureaucrats do the things they do?”

*** Socialization into academic fields

Few of us get our bearings by looking at a discipline or a field as it developed linearly over time. Instead, each cohort of scholars and graduate students takes their cues from the introductory lectures that their mentors offer to new students (Ortner 1984). I got my initial bearings in anthropology from an undergraduate teacher — a very good archaeologist — who in 1962 used his 1946 lecture notes from a Harvard graduate course on “Culture Change” to teach a Dartmouth course with the same tide (Eickelman 2010). The anchor reading for the course was Malinowski’s posthumously published Dynamics of Culture Change (Malinowski 1945). Later, in my initial year in anthropology graduate studies at the University of Chicago in 1966–1967, Clifford Geertz brilliantly reproduced his own introduction to the discipline as offered by Harvard’s Social Relations program in 1950 (Eickelman 2005: 63–64).

I got personally interested in media studies before the field began to assert itself as a discipline in its own right. In the 1960s attention to the media figured neither in my text-based Islamic studies training at McGill University or subsequently in graduate studies in anthropology at the University of Chicago. One faculty member in 1966 advised me that my knowledge of written and formal Arabic was a ‘handicap’ because intellectuals and schoolteachers, among others, would give me a distorted view of ‘real’ culture as opposed to Arabs who could speak only their local dialect.

Independently of academic work I had practical experience with media. In 1960–1961 I worked professionally in radio at an AM (amplitude modulation) station licensed to broadcast only from sunup to sundown. One day a week I took charge of everything for the entire broadcast day, and my working hours clearly varied with the seasons of the year. The local police knew me, as I called them regularly for local news, and I obtained a Federal Communications Commission third class radio operator’s license so that I could do the engineering, at least in theory. This license also required the

ability to transmit and receive Morse code at 15 words per minute, a skill today valuable for giving me practical experience in the communication habits of an earlier era in which messages were usually reduced to the essential minimum, condensed at origin and expanded on reception. News came over a telex at 60 words per minute and when cable links or equipment broke down, or the telex jammed, I had to figure out how to keep everything going until we went off the air at sundown.

When I went on my first visit overseas, to Addis Ababa in summer 1961, I could understand the pre-digital technical setup at the national radio station that I visited with an Ethiopian student friend in the daytime. When we returned after dark to the station to borrow some dance records for a party at the university, we were chased away at bayonet point. There had been a failed coup d’et&t in December 1960, and the control of radio was a sensitive issue. On my return to Dartmouth in 1961, one of my favorite courses was ‘Propaganda’, taught by an academic who worked for the US Office of War Information during the Second World War. The course taught me not only how press information was prepared and filtered; it also taught me how to assess the limits of deception in ‘information’.

By 1968, when I made an initial to Baghdad — I had intended to do field research in Najaf — my daily measure of the political climate was a walk past the radio station in the upscale Karradet Miriam quarter, now better known as the

Green Zone. Were the guards from just two military services there, or more? Did their rifles and submachine guns have ammunition clips or not? At the time, Iraqi soldiers were normally not issued ammunition within the capital area.

In the Sultanate of Oman in 1979, one of the most secure building complexes in the country was the Ministry of Information compound. One day a Dhofari ex-rebel, who was then Director of Information — I have called him Chief Censor in my field notes — invited me to the daily print media censorship meeting. Local news in Oman was always delayed by a day. The workers were Egyptian journalists and they looked terrified because their boss

inexplicably allowed an American join their meeting. They were acutely aware of the shadow role of a British advisor who managed the country's information (see Groueff 2003: 618–29). At least for that day, I got to see the internal government summary on what was going on that day, and the resulting news fit to print.

By the 1990s I began to present papers on the new media in the Middle East, including Mass Higher Education and the Religious Imagination (Eickelman 1992) and others (for example, Eickelman 1999). Others I co-authored with colleagues. Some of this work came to the attention of the Rockefeller Foundation. Early in 1994 one of their senior officials called to ask me about my current interests, and then I was asked how my work could be accelerated. I suggested a 'Noah's ark' form of workshop that would bring together a combination of religious figures willing to speak under Chatham House rules, censors, human rights activists, and academics to discuss the possibilities and limits of expression and dissemination of ideas in Muslim majority countries. At the time, photocopy machines, fax machines, and audiocassette tapes were state of the art. E-mail and Listservs were just beginning to have an impact. Al-Jazeera Satellite Television was to begin broadcast only in November 1996.

I was initially cautious of the offer of Rockefeller fast track funding for a conference at their Bellagio center. To allay my reserve, I was shown notes documenting a high-level meeting of key people from several international foundations held after the June 1989 Tianmen Square massacre. The initial goal of the meeting was what could be done to promote democracy and human rights in China. Someone raised the same question about the Muslim majority world. Several participants commented that meaningful reform in such countries was unlikely. A few participants strongly disagreed. One meeting outcome was a Rockefeller Foundation project begun in 1993 — but unknown to me at the time — that assessed how museums in these countries represented the past, contemporary art movements, and women's networks. My role, I suppose, was to assess the changing media ecology in Muslim countries and its implications for politics, religion, and society. The proposal for the workshop held in March 1995 was the shortest I ever wrote and the fastest approved, and the outcome was reasonably successful (see Eickelman and Anderson 1997). I always try to include students in projects,

so one each from Italy, Morocco, and Bangladesh. All now follow academic careers.

In 1996, I visited Syria to learn more about publishing related to religious topics. I went with a former ambassador and journalist from an Arabian Peninsula country, a bdfiz (memorizer of the Quran) among other skills, who enabled me to do much more than would have been possible on my own. After an initial unexpected middle of the night interview with the head of security for the Arab Ba‘th Socialist Party — a Syrian friend later called this my ‘inoculation’ — I met with other party officials, religious leaders, publishers, intellectuals, poets, bookstore owners who explained the difference between distributing books ‘above’ the table (authorized distribution) and ‘below’ it (unauthorized but tolerated).

Analyzing media is a highly collaborative enterprise, and it would not have been possible without the cooperation with a large number of colleagues in many countries. Al-Jazeera now stages organized tours, but in 1998, when I first visited their studios, visitors were still rare. Due to a misunderstanding, an early al-Jazeera advertising brochure from that year mistakenly claimed that I was using the Syrian broadcaster Faisal al-Kassem’s program, “The Opposite Direction” (al-ittigdh al-mucdkis) as the basis of a for-credit course at Dartmouth. I gave John Burns of the New York Times the idea of how important the rise of Arab satellite television had become. He got his ‘scoop’ on 4 July, 1999 (Burns 1999), a day that Americans have the leisure (he said) to read long articles. He later explained to: “We don’t use footnotes. But you’re the only Western scholar mentioned in the article. That’s your thanks.” For a while, the article served as a calling card that I could use to meet with other Middle Eastern media professionals.

*** Emerging trends

Formal academic writing often downplays the element of chance in how research develops. Many opportunities come not just through calculation, but by having the languages, discipline, and ability to work with others needed to understand new or unusual situations — including the rapidly changing media ecology. With the advent of Web 2.0, anthropologist Michael Wesch

explained in late 2008,[2] ‘mediation’ is more than content. It becomes a readily accessible, compelling part of reality itself, forming communities and spreading ideas in ways not always predictable. No one could have predicted the rapid growth of the social media and their potential for reconfiguring ideas of community, faith, and authority. The June 2009 Iranian demonstrations showed the power of Facebook and Twitter to confront state authority, at least briefly. In return, state authorities are not devoid of the skills and resources to locate and block even the most dedicated of regime dissidents—in Iran in June 2009 and in the 2011 ‘Arab Spring’.

In collaborative work with Jon Anderson (Eickelman and Anderson 1999, 2003) and Armando Salvatore (Salvatore and Eickelman 2004, Eickelman and Salvatore 2007), we have tried to pay increasing attention to the rapidly shifting organizational and communicative structures by which ideas are spread and movements take shape. The result is the enhanced interest in ‘new’ interpreters, media, and the public sphere, with innovation occurring in increasingly rapid cycles (Anderson 2009). Practices conventional in the late 1990s and early twenty-first century have already become outmoded.

The most profound transformations in the Muslim world today occur through the actions of middle class professionals and religious intellectuals not trained in the conventional religious sciences. They are taking charge of developing their faith and practices for a modern, even postmodern, world that is as challenging for Muslims and non-Muslims alike. We are familiar with fundamentalists, radicals, and secularists, but less so with intellectuals rethinking religion outside traditional boundaries, organizers shaping new movements, others working quietly behind the scenes in support roles, and reformers facing the institutional challenge of going public.

The focus on ideas and organizational forms has been well studied. Less well known is the impact of the concrete sets of skills and aptitudes now being cultivated among members of the educated middle classes, religious and non-religious, clerical and non-clerical, in majority Muslim countries. These skills contribute to mainstreaming Islam, the production of what is less exotic and therefore more normal and acceptable, which is itself a form of social and religious tolerance.

Four major skill sets are associated with mainstreaming. First are intellectuals who take charge of developing ideas and persuading large audiences in states where organized non-governmental movements are strongly discouraged. In Syria, for example, intellectuals who act on their own, whether religious or secular, have until recently been allowed considerable liberty to write provided that they avoid criticism of the government. These include such thinkers as Muhammad Shahrur, the secularist Sadek al-cAzm, and the Kurdish-speaking Damascene television preacher, Sacid Ramadan al-Buti.

The second set of skills is the overt, upfront organizing of people and communicating effectively. States, both liberal and totalitarian ones, depend on middle class professionals just as successful religious and civic movements do, in Indonesia like in Morocco. State-sponsored efforts at religious dialogue, such as the Saudi-initiated 2008 interfaith conference in Madrid,[3] and the intrafaith 2004 ‘Amman Message’ of Jordan’s King c Abdallah calling for moderation are organized and managed by middle class professionals,[4] like non-state initiatives such as the interfaith initiatives of the followers of Fethullah Gillen in Turkey and elsewhere.[5] Forums and associations that promote ideas and the exchange of ideas, such as the Arab Thought Forum for Palestinians,[6] represent such upfront organizing. The civil society debate intersects with organizing for mainstreaming Islam, but it is not simply identifiable with that debate since the focus is not on civility in itself or democratization, but with the selling of the ideas and practices of a certain way of putting faith to work in society.

A third related skill is working quietly behind the scenes to further an interest or cause where weak forms of civic empowerment are linked to strong forms of structure, such as in the United Arab Emirates, where major state-sponsored initiatives are underway to use the Islamic studies curriculum of primary and secondary schools to create a template for inculcating values of critical thinking, gender parity, and religious tolerance. Likewise, the February 2004 revision of Moroccan family law, the Mudawwanah, to enhance the rights of women, was in preparation for years but enacted only in the wake of the May 2003 terrorist

attacks in Casablanca, an event that empowered the monarchy to undertake a bold major initiative without significant opposition.

A final skill is that of publicity trumping secrecy. Turkey's Fethullah Gillen has inspired a network of schools, newspapers, and radio and television outlets that convey to his followers a respect for educational excellence and religious tolerance. Publicity can overcome secrecy and suspicion, and in this way contributes significantly to 'normalizing' groups and ideas.

Mainstreaming, however, also exacts a price. The advocates of mainstreaming can be criticized for downplaying cultural specificities in favor of gaining wider audiences. Opponents to mainstreaming can be tenacious. Nonetheless, the gravity of discussion has significantly shifted with the factors discussed in this article, including the spread of mass higher education, the growing pervasiveness and ease of access of the new media, and the greater ease of travel and communications in general.

The convergence of new media and the mainstreaming of Islam signals a major change from below. It does not just emanate from key thinkers and religious leaders. Resistance to such transformations can be uneven, contradictory, and raw, but there is also growing explicit acknowledgment of such conflicting views in public space and a wider tolerance for dissent and controversy. As the new media develop, the significance of media studies as a distinct field of inquiry arising initially from the margins of existing disciplines becomes more clear. To paraphrase the Hungarian composer, Gyorgy Ligeti (1923–2006; personal communication 16 May, 2001), creativity comes through the endless repetition of the familiar. Media studies will come to the foreground of social thought and Islamic Studies as they persuade wider audiences in existing disciplines and the general public why a focus on the media is important and that such knowledge and the frameworks in which it is conveyed will influence work in one's own field and neighboring disciplines. The ground rules for how media studies will take shape as a primary field of inquiry are the same as for older, established fields. As Adam Pzreworski and Frank Salomon (1998 [1988]) wrote over two decades ago, persuasive social science tells us something new, persuades us that it is important to know, valid, and has the capacity to influence others in the field and in neighboring disciplines and a wider public. Media studies at the

intersection of area and Islamic studies are now poised to make such a contribution.

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The secular bias of modernization theory has had a significant role in deflecting attention away from the role of religious practices and values in contemporary societies, particularly in the Muslim majority world. In the early 1960s, a leading public intellectual saw the Muslim world as facing an unpalatable choice: either a “neo-Islamic totalitarianism” intent on “resurrecting the past,” or a “reformist Islam” that would open “the sluice gates and [be] swamped by the deluge.”[1] Another suggested that Middle Eastern societies faced the stark choice of “Mecca or mechanization.”[2] At the least, such views suggested an intensely negative assessment of the possibilities of evolution in Muslim societies and an inherent preference for militantly secularizing reformers such as Turkey’s Mustafa Kemal Ataturk (1881–1938) and the Pahlavi Shahs of Iran, Reza Shah (1878–1944) and his son, Mohammed Reza Shah (1919–1980).

Although such views were first expressed in the 1960s, they remained prevalent in the 1990s. In 1994, for example, Ernest Gellner reiterated the view that “Muslim society” remained the exception to the pervasive trend toward a shared culture of nationalism with its ensuing fruit of modernity—commonly educated, mutually substitutable, atomized individuals with the potential for participating in a “civil society.” Gellner argued that civil society precludes the “ideological monopoly” that Islam supposedly enjoins.[3]

In such formulations, Islam is viewed as a particularly salient example of the diminishing or obstructive role of religion and of religious thinkers in achieving a modern society in which individuals negotiate lifestyle choices

among a diversity of options not necessarily congruent with collective religious sentiments.[4] Open societies claim to respect religion and religious worship. At the same time, however, in the words of philosopher Richard Rorty, religion usually functions as a “conversation-stopper” outside of circles of believers.[5]

Rorty’s observation points to a second underlying continuity in the view of most modernization theories concerning the contemporary role of religious intellectuals. Writing in the heyday of modernization theory in the 1960s, Edward Shils observed that “intellectual” work originally arose from religious occupations, but that religious orientations in modern times attract “a diminishing share of the creative capacities of the oncoming intellectual elite.” In Shils’s view, “the tradition of distrust of secular and ecclesiastical authority—and in fact of tradition as such—has become the chief secondary tradition of the intellectuals.”[6] The notion of the sacred had shifted, in his view, from religious concerns to a focus on and mastery of the technological, organizational, and political skills most useful in forging a modern state. The present thus belongs to the liberals and the technocrats, found primarily in the differentiated “modern” class. Shils argues that only intellectuals attached to these “modern” values have the vision to rise above parochial identities and to attach themselves to the notion of a modern nationstate. “Religious” intellectuals are thus implicitly marginalized.

Common to all variants of modernization theory is the assumption of a declining role for religion, except as a private matter. To move toward modernity, political leaders must displace the authority of religious leaders and devalue the importance of traditional religious institutions. “Modernity” is seen as an “enlargement of human freedoms” and an “enhancement of the range of choices” as people begin to “take charge” of themselves.[7] Religion can retain its influence only by conforming to such norms as “rationality” and relativism, accepting secularization, and making compromises with science, economic concerns, and the state.

Recent history offers formidable challenges to modernization theory. Of all the countries of the Third World, Iran was a society that had undergone enormous modernization prior to 1978–1979. Nonetheless, the state’s greatest challenge emanated from the growing urban middle classes, those

who had benefited the most from modernization. Revolution, not political stability, was the result. Moreover, it was religious sentiment and leadership, not the secular intelligentsia, that gave the revolution its coherence and force.

Writing from the perspective of the late 1990s, an Iranian political scientist, Fariba Adelkhah, goes further. She argues that the real Iranian revolution is taking place only now, with the coming of age of a new generation of Iranians who were not even born at the time of the 1978–1979 revolution. This new generation is creating and participating in an Iranian “religious public sphere” (espace public confessionel) in which politics and religion are subtly intertwined, and not always in ways anticipated by Iran’s established religious leaders. The emergence of this public sphere has also been accompanied by a greater sense of personal autonomy for both women and men.[8]

Latin America also offers contrary examples to the conventional wisdom of modernization theory. In Peru and Guatemala, new networks of trust, confidence, and organizational capacities have arisen with religious change as groups of clergy, including progressive Catholics in Peru and evangelicals in Guatemala, create a social capital in which “‘stability’ is created from below, not imposed from above.”[9] The United States might serve as a further example, in which religious congregations, hierarchies, and religious special interests contribute significantly to ongoing debates over collective values.[10]

How disconcerting to the view of modernity and modernization as excluding religion from the public sphere and the nationstate to see no less a committed political leader than Vaclav Havel write that “human rights, human freedoms, and human dignity have their deepest roots outside the perceptible world.” On the state and its probable role in the future, Havel writes that “while the state is a human creation, human beings are the creation of God.”[11] Havel considers modern thought, “based on the premise that the world is objectively knowable, and that the knowledge so obtained can be absolutely generalized,” to have reached a “final” crisis. The way out, he concludes, is for the politician of the future to trust in “soul, individual spirituality,” and, above all, “in his own subjectivity as his principal

link with the subjectivity of the world."[12] Labeled by some as a contemporary "Romantic Rebel," Havel's ideas nonetheless influenced U.S. debates over funding for basic science research in the mid- 1990s.[13]

Havel notwithstanding, it is primarily in the Muslim world that—in Gilles Kepel's evocative phrase—we are faced with the "revenge of God."[14] In a globalized McWorld, only the "green menace" of "Jihad" offers resistance to the advance of modernization and the Enlightenment. Or does it?

*** The Return of Religion

It is easy to be critical of Samuel Huntington's "West versus the Rest" argument, but he was one of the first political scientists to spur other political scientists as well as international relations theorists to encourage colleagues and policymakers to reemphasize the role of culture and "tradition" in political and international relations.[15] Decades before Huntington's "West versus the Rest" argument, other writers, notably Edward Shils, vigorously argued that "tradition" is not a residual concept that can uniformly describe the "pre-modern" values of all civilizations and cultures. For the premodern era as for today, it is difficult to see civilizations and cultures as sharply demarcated and closed.[16] "Traditions" are clusters of cultural concepts, shared understandings, and practices that make political and social life possible.[17] Such pervasive cultural understandings play a crucial element in constituting what we now recognize as "multiple modernities."[18] They coexist with and shape the experience of modernity. In this sense, ethnicity, caste, and clientelism can be as distinctly modern as the idea of individual choice.

A principal difficulty with Huntington's "West versus the Rest" formulation is that, having reintroduced culture and religion to thinking about politics, he overstated their coherence and force, in addition to treating the Muslim world as a monolithic bloc. Culture became an independent variable. The view of religion as a stark alternative—either an independent or a dependent variable—can be avoided by adopting an approach to understanding politics that goes beyond power relations and interests alone. Approaching these issues in a more effective way also requires incorporating

an understanding of the shared, often implicit, ideas of what is right, just, or religiously ordained—ideas upon which individuals in a society or from different societies base cooperative relations. Such background understandings are common to adherents of religion, be it Islam, Christianity, or Hinduism. Evolving doctrinal considerations are only one factor among many that contribute to the creation of frameworks of practices and understandings, and adherents to religious traditions are far from monolithic in their use of these frameworks.

Politics is also a struggle over people's imaginations, a competition over the meanings of symbols. It encompasses the interpretation of symbols and the control of institutions, formal and informal, that produce and sustain them. This interpretation is played out against a backdrop of values and practices embedded in a "social imaginary"—the implicit understandings against which the beliefs and practices in any given society are formulated.[19] More broadly, politics can be conceived as cooperation in and contest over symbolic production and control of the institutions—formal and informal—that serve as the symbolic arbiters of society. Politics as Leviathan is thus decisively abandoned in favor of politics as symbolmaker.[20]

The role of symbolic politics in general, or of "Muslim politics"—in the sense of a field for debate and not a bloc of uniform belief and practice—can be seen as less exceptional if the European experience with secularism is kept in mind. Historian Dominique Colas argues that religious discourse was a basic precondition for the rise of the early modern public sphere in Europe.[21] To this day, strong "background" understandings of Christianity remain in such matters as blasphemy laws, religious holidays, and public prayers.[22] Indeed, contemporary defenders of secularism often exaggerate the durability and 124 DaleF. Eickelman open-mindedness of thoroughly secular institutions, be they in the United States, in Turkey, or in India. In the context of the Muslim-majority Middle East, the militant secularism of some governing elites—the Turkish officer corps, for example—is associated with authoritarianism and intolerance rather than with "enlightenment" values.

Because the Muslim-majority world remains feared by those who regard it as the last outpost of the antimodern, the role of religious intellectuals in

contributing to an emerging public sphere is often overlooked. This public sphere is rapidly expanding because of the growth of higher education, the increasing ease of travel, and the proliferation of media and means of communication.

In country after country since the 1950s, access to higher education has rapidly expanded. Morocco, for instance, committed itself to universal schooling after gaining independence from France in 1956. Though in 1957 only 13,000 secondaryschool degrees were awarded and university enrollments remained low, by 1965 there were more than 200,000 students in secondary schools and some 20,000 in universities. By 1992, secondary-school enrollment topped 1.5 million and university students numbered 240,000. While illiteracy rates in the general populace remain high—38 percent for men and 62 percent for women—there is now a critical mass of educated people who are able to read and think for themselves, without relying on state and religious authorities.[23]

The situation in Oman is more dramatic, because the transformation has taken place in a much shorter period. In 19751976, a mere 22 students attended secondary school. Little more than a decade later, in 1987–1988, 13,500 did. In 1997, there were 77,000, and there are more than 8,000 students in post-secondary institutions, including the national university, which opened in 1986.[24]

Elsewhere the story is much the same, although the starting dates and levels of achievement differ. In Turkey, Indonesia, and Malaysia, mass education has reached every city, town, and village. In Turkey, for instance, adult illiteracy rates as of 1995 were 8 percent for males and 28 percent for females, down from 65 percent and 85 percent, respectively, four decades earlier. Secondary schools are now ubiquitous, and both private and public universities have proliferated. In Indonesia, university enrollment, only 50,000 in 1960, reached 2.3 million in 1996.[25]

Even where educational expansion has not kept up with population growth, large numbers of citizens now speak a common language. In Arabic, for example, there often is a great divide between the colloquial speech of

everyday use and the formal, standard language of newspapers, radio, and public speech. Education, especially higher education, in the “public” language of formal, literary Arabic allows people to “talk back” to religious and political authorities in this public language. Education, like mass communications, also makes people more conscious of their beliefs and practices and encourages thinking of them as a system, allowing for comparison with other ideas and practices. Education and the greater ease of communication also erode intellectual and physical boundaries and enable connections to be made across formerly impenetrable barriers of class, locality, language, and ethnic group.

Both mass education and mass communications, particularly the proliferation of media, profoundly influence how people think about the language of religious and political authority throughout the Muslim world. We are still in the early stages of understanding how different media—p»“int, television, radio, music, and the Internet—influence groups and individuals, encouraging unity in some contexts and fragmentation in others.

Although rivaled by other media, the printed word remains a privileged cultural vehicle for shaping religious beliefs and practices throughout the Muslim world. Books and pamphlets, including banned ones, are discussed and invoked in sermons, lectures, reviews, and conversations. In seeking to ban and confiscate them, censors only draw attention to their existence and increase their circulation.[26]

At the high end of this transformation is the rise to significance of books such as al-Kitab wa-l-Qur’an: Qira’a mu‘asira (The Book and the Qur’an: A Contemporary Interpretation), an eight-hundred-page work first published in 1990 by the Syrian civil engineer Muhammad Shahrur. He has subsequently published books and pamphlets elaborating his views on the role of the state, civil society, and democracy in Qur’anic thought.[27] The first book has sold tens of thousands of copies throughout the Arab world in both authorized (in Damascus and Beirut) and pirate (in Cairo) editions and is widely distributed in photocopies in countries such as Saudi Arabia, where its circulation has been banned or discouraged. Books such as Shahrur’s could not have been imagined before large numbers of people could read and understand its advocacy of the need to reinterpret ideas of religious

authority and tradition and to apply Islamic precepts to contemporary society.

Shahrur draws an analogy between the Copernican revolution and Qur'anic interpretation, which he says has been shackled for centuries by the conventions of medieval jurists and those willing to follow in their tradition:

<quote>

People believed for a long time that the sun revolved around the earth, but they were unable to explain some phenomena derived from this assumption until one person, human like themselves, said, "The opposite is true: The earth revolves around the sun." ... After a quarter of a century of study and reflection, it dawned on me that we Muslims are shackled by prejudices (musallimat), some of which are completely opposite from the [correct perspective].[28]

</quote>

On issues ranging from the role of women in society to rekindling a "creative interaction" with non-Muslim philosophies, Shahrur argues that Muslims should reinterpret sacred texts anew and apply them to contemporary social and moral issues: "If Islam is sound [salih] for all times and places," then we must not neglect historical developments and the interaction of different generations. We must act as if "the Prophet just... informed us of this Book."[29]

Shahrur's ideas directly challenge the authoritative tradition of Qur'anic exegesis {tafsir) and Islamic jurisprudence (fiqh). The subtitle of his first book—A Contemporary Interpretation—uses the term qira'a, which can mean either reading or interpretation, rather than the term tafsir, which directly evokes the established conventions of traditional Islamic learning from which Shahrur advocates a decisive break. Shahrur argues that traditional disciplines of learning such as tafsir have implicitly acquired an authority equal to that of the Qur'an itself, except that the juridical tradition says little about tyranny, absolutism, and

democracy.[30] Such ideas are at the center of an emerging global debate in which all Muslims—argue thinkers such as Shahrur—have a personal obligation to participate.

Because Shahrur's ideas pose such basic challenges to established religious authority, he has been attacked in Friday sermons in Damascus and elsewhere, even though one leading legal scholar, Wael Hallaq, recently wrote that Shahrur's efforts to reformulate Islamic jurisprudence are the "most convincing" of those of all contemporary thinkers.[31]

The vigorous discussion his ideas have provoked is all the more noteworthy because his notion of disseminating his ideas is almost as formally rigorous as Kant's notion of "public" contained in his essay on the Enlightenment. For Kant, the idea of "public" is the words of a writer appearing before readers without the help of authoritative intermediaries such as preachers, judges, and rulers. With the exception of a small study circle in Damascus composed mostly of engineers, Shahrur's primary means of communication is the book, an unadorned means of persuasion that appeals to a growing educated middle class and continues to represent the pinnacle of knowledge to others. His public appearances are infrequent and he has never appeared on radio or television in the Arab world.

Shahrur is only one of many public intellectuals in the Muslim world who implicitly attack both conventional religious wisdom and the intolerant certainties of religious radicals, and he argues instead for a constant and open reinterpretation of how sacred texts apply to social and political life. Another Syrian thinker, the secularist Sadiq Jalal al-'Azm, does the same. A debate between al-'Azm and Shaykh Yusif al-Qaradawi, a conservative religious intellectual, was broadcast on al-Jazira satellite television (Qatar) on May 27, 1997. For the first time in the memory of many viewers, the religious conservative came across as the weaker, more defensive voice. A similar debate took place in December of 1997 on the same program, between Nasir Hamid Abu Zayd and the Egyptian religious thinker Muhammad 'Imara. Such discussions are unlikely to be rebroadcast on state-controlled television in most Arab nations, where programming on religious and political themes is generally cautious. Nevertheless, satellite technology and videotape render

traditional censorship ineffective. Tapes of these broadcasts circulate from hand to hand in Morocco, Oman, Syria, Egypt, and elsewhere.[32]

Other voices also advocate reform. Fethullah Giilen, Turkey's answer to media-savvy American evangelist Billy Graham, appeals to a wide spectrum of religiously minded Turks, both in Turkey and elsewhere in the world. In televised chat shows, interviews, and occasional sermons, Giilen speaks about Islam and science, democracy, modernity, religious and ideological tolerance, the importance of education, and current events.[33] Religious movements such as Turkey's Risale-i Nur appeal increasingly to religious moderates, and the link between Islam, reason, science, and modernity, and the lack of inherent clash between "East" and "West," promote education at all levels and appeal to growing numbers of educated Turks. One need not visit Turkey to learn more about the movement; its web site is available in English and Turkish.[34]

Iran's Abdukarim Soroush argues that a proper understanding of Islam enjoins dialogue, a willingness to understand the opinions of others, adaptation, and civility. Indonesian and Malaysian moderates make similar arguments.[35] To the annoyance of more conservative clerics, Soroush has captured the religious imagination of Persian speakers in Iran and abroad, and his work, in printed translation and on the Internet in several languages including Turkish, Arabic, and English, has a reach far beyond Iran.

Not all influential religious books are aimed at highbrows. Mass schooling has created a wide audience of people who read but are not literary sophisticates, and there has been an explosive growth in what a French colleague of mine, Yves Gonzalez- Quijano, calls generic "Islamic books"—inexpensive, attractively printed mass-market texts.[36] Some of these books address practical questions of how to live as a Muslim in the modern world and the perils of neglecting Islamic obligations, and not all appeal to reason and moderation. Many have bold, eyecatching covers and sensational titles such as The Terrors of the Grave, or What Follows Death.[37] Other, more subdued works—usually written by men—offer advice to young women on how to live as Muslims today. Often based on the sermons of popular preachers, Islamic books are written in a breezy, colloquial style rather than the cadences of traditional literary Arabic and are

sold on sidewalks and outside mosques rather than in bookstores. While Egyptian Nobel Laureate Naguib Mahfouz is considered successful if he sells five thousand copies of one of his novels in a year in his own country, Islamic books often have sales in six figures.

As a result of direct and broad access to the printed, broadcast, and electronically recorded word, more and more Muslims take it upon themselves to interpret the textual sources— classical or modern—of Islam. Much has been made of the “opening up” (infitah’) of the economies of many Muslim-ma- jority countries, allowing “market forces” to reshape economies, no matter how painful the consequences in the short run. In Bangladesh, women’s romance novels, once a popular specialty distributed in secular bookstores, now have Islamic counterparts distributed through Islamic bookstores, making it difficult to distinguish between “Muslim” romance novels and “secular” ones.[38]

In a way analogous to economic market forces, intellectual market forces support some forms of religious innovation and activity over others, and in all cases support—or in the most negative instances must appear to support—reasoned public discussion and debate. The result is a collapse of earlier, hierarchical notions of religious authority based on claims to the mastery of fixed bodies of religious texts. Even when there are state-appointed religious authorities—as in Oman, Saudi Arabia, Iran, Egypt, Malaysia, and some of the Central Asian republics—there no longer is any guarantee that their word will be heeded, or even that they themselves will follow the lead of the regime.

*** Religious Intellectuals in the Emerging Public Sphere

Thinkers such as Muhammad Shahrur are redrawing the boundaries of public and religious life in the Muslim-majority world by challenging conventional religious authority. The replacement they suggest implies a constructive fragmentation. With the advent of mass higher education has come an objectification of Islamic tradition in the eyes of many believers. Questions such as “What is Islam?” “How does it apply to the conduct of my life?” and “What are the principles of faith?” increasingly are foregrounded in the consciousness of many believers and are explicitly discussed. These

objectified understandings have irrevocably transformed the Muslim relationship to sacred authority. Of crucial importance in this process has been a “democratization” of the politics of religious authority and the development of a standardized language infixed and disseminated by mass higher education, the mass media, travel, and labor migration. This has led to an opening up of the political process and heightened competition for the mantles of political and religious authority. Without fanfare, the notion of Islam as dialogue and civil debate is gaining ground.

A new sense of publicness is emerging throughout Muslim- majority states and Muslim communities elsewhere. It is shaped by increasingly open contests over the use of the symbolic language of Islam. New and accessible modes of communication have made these contests more global, so that even local issues take on transnational dimensions. Muslims, of course, act not just as Muslims but according to class interests, out of a sense of nationalism, on behalf of tribal or family networks, and out of all the diverse motives that characterize human endeavor. Increasingly, however, large numbers of Muslims explain their goals in terms of the normative, globalized language of Islam. Muslim identity issues are not unitary or identical, but such issues have become a significant force. It is in this sense that one can speak of an emerging Muslim public sphere and a reconsideration of the role of religion in “modern” societies elsewhere.

This distinctly public sphere exists at the intersections of religious, political, and social life and contributes to the creation of civil society. With access to contemporary forms of communication that range from the press and broadcast media to fax machines, audiocassettes, and videocassettes, from the telephone to the Internet, Muslims, like Christians, Hindus, Jews, Sikhs, and others, have more rapid and flexible ways of building and sustaining contact with constituencies than was available in earlier decades. The asymmetries of the earlier mass-media revolution are being reversed by new media in new hands. This combination of new media and new contributors to religious and political debates fosters an awareness on the part of all actors of the diverse ways in which Islam and Islamic values can be created. It feeds into new senses of a public space that is discursive, performative, and participative, and not confined to formal institutions recognized by state authorities.

Just as there are multiple paths to modernity,[39] there is a growing practical awareness throughout the Muslim majority world of multiple claimants to the task of articulating how Islamic virtues should relate to public and political life. In this respect, print and other media direct consciousness to and craft certain models of civility, membership within a community, and citizenship within a nation, all resting on more or less mutual packages of commitments and expectations.[40] As in Hinduism and Christianity, the real “clash of civilizations” in the modern era is not, as Robert Hefner says, “between the West and some homogeneous ‘other’ but between rival carriers of tradition within the same nations and civilizations.”[41]

Publicly shared ideas of community, identity, and leadership take new shapes in such engagements, even as many communities and authorities claim an unchanged continuity with the past. Mass education, so important in the development of nationalism in an earlier era,[42] and a proliferation of media and means of communication have multiplied the possibilities for creating communities and networks between them, dissolving prior barriers of space and distance and opening new grounds for interaction and mutual recognition.

Two cautions, however, are in order. The first is that an expanding public sphere need not necessarily indicate more favorable prospects for democracy, any more than “civil society” necessarily entails democracy (although it is a precondition of such). Authoritarian regimes are also compatible with an expanding public sphere. They may claim to speak for the “people,” although multiple and alternative forms of communication, as well as shared knowledge and ways of thought in the modern world, offer wider avenues for awareness of competing and alternative forms of religious and political authority.

The proliferation of communication and education in today’s global society is increasing the power of religious intellectuals in much of the Muslim-majority world. Increasingly, these intellectuals have become a transnational elite. Acquiring such a global presence may diminish the importance of cultural traditions, but it increases disparities of class. Mobility increases for a small

segment of the elite with globalization, but polarities increase in the more localized remainder. As a consequence, religious intellectuals like Iran’s Abdokarim Soroush become more in tune with Edward Said, but at the risk of losing touch with the local majority.

In the present era, to paraphrase the Sorbonne-educated Sudanese religious intellectual Hasan Turabi, an ‘alim, or religious intellectual, is as likely to be an engineer or doctor as a religious scholar.[43] Even the idea of Islamic law, the shari‘a, once a matter entrusted to specialists, now involves large numbers of people—and not just a scholastically trained religious elite—who debate its meaning and application.[44] Just as the new media have blurred the line between public and private, so has the modern era blurred the assumed hard-and-fast line between religion and politics.

The prevailing secularist bias of many current theories of society has alternately marginalized and demonized religious forces and religious intellectuals. I have emphasized trends in the Muslim world because they have been characterized as especially resistant to “modernity.” Yet the Muslim majority world is as open as that of any other civilizational domain. We live in a world in which an Islamic leader such as Fethullah Gillen meets popes and patriarchs, advocating diversity and tolerance in the public sphere more than many of those who are secular. Far from compromising the public sphere, religious movements and religious intellectuals in the Muslim-majority world can advocate compromise and a mutual agreement to persuade by words rather than by force. Religious intellectuals may claim strong links with the past, but their practice in the present conveys significantly different ideas of person, authority, and responsibility.

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[3] Ernest Gellner, Conditions of Liberty: Civil Society and Its Rivals (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1994), 211.

[4] See Anthony Giddens, Modernity and Self-identity: Self and Society in the Late Modern Age (Cambridge, England: Polity Press, 1991), 1, 11.

[5] Cited in John Keane, “The Limits of Secularism,” Times Literary Supplement, 9 January 1999, 12.

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[10] Robert Wuthnow, Producing the Sacred: An Essay on Public Religion (Urbana, Ill.: University of Illinois Press, 1994).

[11] Vaclav Havel, “Kosovo and the End of the Nation-State,” New York Review of Books, 10 June 1999, 4–6.

[12] Vaclav Havel, “The End of the Modern Era,” New York Times, 1 March 1992, E15.

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[14] Gilles Kepel, The Revenge of God: The Resurgence of Islam, Christianity and Judaism in the Modern World, trans. Alan Braley (University Park, Pa.: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1994).

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[17] Charles Taylor, “Modernity and the Rise of the Public Sphere,” in The Tanner Lectures on Human Values (Salt Lake City, Utah: University of Utah Press, 1993), vol. 14, 213.

[18] Shmuel Eisenstadt, Japanese Civilization: A Comparative View (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997).

[19] See Taylor, “Modernity and the Rise of the Public Sphere,” 218–219.

[20] See Dale F. Eickelman and James Piscatori, Muslim Politics (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1996), 5–11.

[21] Dominique Colas, Civil Society and Fanaticism: Conjoined Histories, trans. Amy Jacobs (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1997).

[22] Keane, “The Limits of Secularism,” 12.

[23] World Bank, Knowledge for Development: World Development Report, 1998–1999 (New York: Oxford University Press for the World Bank, 1999), table 2 and prior editions.

[24] Sultanate of Oman, Ministry of Development, Statistical Near Book, 1996 (Muscat: Ministry of Development, 1997), 541, and prior editions.

[25] UNESCO, Statistical Yearbook, 1998 (Latham, Md.: UNESCO Publishing and Bernan Press, 1998), table 3.7.

[26] Dale F. Eickelman and Jon Anderson, “Print, Islam, and the Prospects for Civic Pluralism: New Religious Writings and Their Audiences,” Journal of Islamic Studies 8(1) (January 1997): 6. ,

[27] Muhammad Shahrur, al-Kitab wa-l-Qur’an: Qira’a mu‘asira (The Book and the Qur’an: A Contemporary Reading) (Beirut: Sharikat al-Matbu‘at li-1- Tawzi’ wa-l-Nashr, 1992); Shahrur, Dirasat Islamiya al-mu‘asira fi-l-dawla wa-l-mujtama’a (Contemporary Islamic Studies on State and Society) (Damascus: al-Ahali li-l-Taba‘a wa-l-Nashr, 1994); Shahrur, al-Islam wa-l-iman: Manzumat al-qiyam (Islam and Faith: A Treatise on Values) (Damascus: al- Ahali li-l-Taba‘a wa-l-Nashr, 1996); and

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[28] Shahrur, al-Kitab wa-l-Qur’an, 29.

[29] Shahrur, Dirasat Islamiya, 23. As popular as Shahrur’s views are in some circles, some conservative Muslims argue that he underestimates the ability of madrasa-trained religious scholars to adapt their version of authoritative religious learning to new contexts. However, most observers agree that madrasa-trained scholars are losing their audience and former authority.

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[32] See John F. Burns, “Arab TV Gets a New Slant: Newscasts Without Censorship,” New York Times, 4 July 1999, Al, 6.

[33] Biilent Aras, “Turkish Islam’s Moderate Face,” Middle East Quarterly 5 (3) (September 1998): 23–30; Eickelman, “Inside the Islamic Reformation.”

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Recent shifts in religious consciousness throughout the Muslim world have increasingly blurred the line between religion and politics with major implications for how politics are imagined. In a positive sense, this trend augurs a heightened political consciousness and desire for participation; the growing fragmentation of political and religious authority—associated at least in part with the rise of mass higher education and the inexorable growth of mass communications—enables more voices and views to be heard in the political arena.[1] On the negative side, some of the most popular religious and political messages are intolerant of competing points of view. The recent experience of countries such as Indonesia suggests that a religiously oriented moral vision can capture significant elements of the middle class and form the basis for a ‘civic pluralism’.[2] By ‘civic pluralism’ we mean both state tolerance for the growth of legally recognized non-governmental organizations and the less formal, but equally significant, strengthening of values which affirm that individuals should be more civil to one another, regardless of political and religious differences. For the Middle East, Islamist discourse and practice offer examples of movements which both accommodate (as in Jordan) and reject (as in Sudan and Algeria) ‘civic pluralism’.[3]

How messages with religious and political content get listened to in the ‘new’ Middle East and the Muslim world and the limits to their form and content within different channels of communication are issues with significant political implications. Participants in a workshop on ‘Print, Islam, and Civic Pluralism: New Religious Writings and Their Public’ (20—4 March 1995) in Milan and Bellagio, Italy, sought to address these questions by bringing together publishers, editors, government press advisers, religious activists, foundation officials, and scholars interested in print and publishing throughout the Muslim world and Europe.[4] Our aim was to look at incentives and obstacles to the flow of ideas and how the ‘intellectual

technology’ of various media—print, broadcast, and interactive—shapes audiences, concepts, practices, and authority. Thus the focus was on markets, audiences, and the strengths and weaknesses of various modes of dissemination. Analyses of the writings of contemporary religious thinkers, including Islamists, are relatively abundant, but only a few studies focus on what is read, viewed, and heard and by whom.[5] Rather than concentrating on those who create texts, our focus shifted to those responsible for distributing, marketing, monitoring, and censoring various messages, along with religious and political actors and analysts concerned with how issues and messages are framed and contextualized for various audiences.

We did not anticipate a convergence of views among the participants but succeeded in comparing the contexts of competing, overlapping, and increasingly self-aware ways of writing and speaking about Islam and the role of Islam in political thought and action on the part of persons and groups with widely varying backgrounds. The depiction of these perspectives facilitates an understanding of current trends and an awareness of what can be said and how it is likely to be understood. Since such perspectives may differ significantly in how issues are framed or contextualized as historic phenomena, bringing together representatives of these perspectives from various Muslim communities aids an understanding of the local and transregional limits of what is said and how it is communicated effectively. The Russian literary critic Mikhail Bakhtin suggests that the ‘excess of seeing’ that results from such shared perspectives overcomes limitations created by being situated in a particular place and context.[6] We aim to suggest comparisons in this article, but we also hope to adjust our instruments of observation to understand better how changes in publication and communications facilitate new trends in political and religious expression.

*** New Forms of Publication, New Boundaries of Debate: The Rise of ‘Islamic’ Books

Throughout the Muslim world the printed word remains the privileged cultural vehicle for shaping religious beliefs and practices. Books and pamphlets, including banned ones, are talked about and invoked as authority in sermons, cassettes, lectures, reviews, and conversations. In seeking to

ban or confiscate them, censors often increase their circulation. But radio, cable, satellite, conventional broadcast television, fax, video and audio cassettes, the Internet, and other forms of electronic communications are rapidly changing the context and role of print media. Moreover, the relation of the various media to one another rapidly fluctuates for political and technological reasons. Views suppressed in one medium emerge in another, and new or newly available media provide outlets for new voices and create new public arenas.[7] Typically, less monitored or controlled media take the place of those that state or religious authorities control or censor: in the 1978–9 Iranian revolution, for example, audio cassettes containing taped sermons often reached Iran from international, direct-dial telephone calls with decisive effect.[8] Today's equivalent, in wealthier states such as Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, is more likely to be the fax machine or electronic mail, while in almost all other countries the ubiquity of photocopy machines and video- and audio-tape copying machines facilitates the rapid and almost untraceable dissemination of forbidden messages.[9]

This multiplication of voices and outlets makes persons or groups who are minorities or outnumbered dissidents in one context feel less isolated than they would have in earlier decades when the 'small media' were less rapid and pervasive, educational levels lower, and populations less politicized. This is because they now can be in contact with their counterparts elsewhere. As a consequence, these new forms of communicative communities also contribute significantly to a fragmentation of political and religious authority. Thus, in nineteenth-century India, traditionally educated religious Elites, who initially approved the dissemination of inexpensive printed texts, gradually found their authority weakened, as readers gained direct access to authoritative texts.[10] Similarly, multiplying the media through which messages can be transmitted diffuses political and religious authority. The state may continue to offer an 'official transcript', in James Scott's phrase, but it may not be considered authoritative or legitimate, even if it is seriously heeded. With the proliferation of media and weakened controls over many of them, 'hidden' transcripts are now more likely to be 'spoken directly and publicly in the teeth of power'.[11] Lastly, the globalization of media blurs the boundaries between local, regional, and international perspectives and between elite and popular culture. These changes lead to a de facto pluralism of political and religious views, even where state authorities, as in Saudi Arabia or Iran, seek to circumscribe what is said in public.

These transformations in how the printed and spoken word is communicated have taken place concurrently with the rise, since the late 1970s, of Islamist movements throughout the Middle East and other regions of the Muslim world, along with demands for greater political participation. Where the openings towards enhanced political participation are highly restrictive, as in many Arabian peninsula countries, state rhetoric and the establishment of consultative bodies—often appointed or selected by carefully managed committees—can be read as responses to domestic and foreign pressures for wider political participation. Mass education has expanded potential readership, and mass communications have enhanced exposure, albeit selectively, to images of the world, but these vehicles of communication have produced readers and listeners who often lack the critical skills of the smaller cohorts who received advanced education in earlier generations.[12]

Media studies in the Middle East remain in their infancy.[13] A recent study from Egypt, however, suggests that changes are under way. In a shift that began in the Sadat era to a more market-driven production of books and pamphlets, the most significant growth has been in ‘Islamic books’—inexpensive, attractively printed texts written in a style accessible to readers who lack the literary skills of the educated cadres of an earlier time.[14] Often disregarding the vocabulary and grammar of formal Arabic in favour of colloquial diction, these books are available to a mass-educated public. They command press runs in the hundreds of thousands, while a book by Egypt’s Nobel laureate is considered successful if it sells 5000—10,000 copies annually.

‘Islamic’ books include advice manuals, tales of religious heroes, fictionalized morality tales (including teen-age ‘Islamic’ romances), and practical guides on how to raise children as Muslims in the contemporary world or how to live as a Muslim. Often more readily available in street kiosks than in conventional bookshops, the short chapters and gripping graphics of these works appeal more to a new, younger, mass- educated audience than to the better-educated readers of ‘liberal’ and secular publications.

Recognizing the market potential for ‘Islamic’ books, businesses place advertisements in them. Other books carry testimonials from well-known popular preachers, and many replicate in printed form messages available on video and audio cassettes. A common phenomenon is the ‘migration’ between media, in which video cassettes are rapidly replacing audio ones and books are often the published counterpart of material which first appeared in audio or video. Although the authors of Islamic books are derided by some conventional writers as journeymen producing works for the semi-literate, others realize that they must go ‘down market’ or see their audiences shrink. Recognizing this, some secularist and leftist writers have ‘migrated’ to writing books for these new audiences.[15]

At the same time, technological changes have multiplied the means of publication. The printing presses of half a century ago—relatively easy for governments to regulate and control—have given way to cassettes, copy machines, and desktop publishing, a change as important to the late twentieth century as the Gutenberg revolution was to fifteenth-century Europe. Publishers and editors point to the expansion and popularization of the book market, where there are many more readers than a decade or two earlier and more outlets for the books, pamphlets, or pirated photocopies. Desktop publishing means that the start-up costs for newsletters, magazines, and pamphlets have dropped significantly. The shift to the vernacular heightens this accessibility, with subtle political consequences for all the languages of the Middle East and elsewhere in the Muslim world. In Turkey, beginning in the AtatUrk era (1923—38), secularist writers celebrated the triumph of the national vernacular over Ottoman Turkish and relegated words and phrases with religious connotations to the periphery of public writing and speaking. Over the past decade, the use of public language with religious connotations has returned to the mainstream of communications. Some religious groups have their own television stations, and commercial printing for religious purposes is expanding.

‘Migrations’ of messages, media, writers, and styles of discourse mark a fragmentation of authority. ‘Islamic’ books set aside the long tradition of authoritative discourse by religious scholars in favour of a direct understanding of texts, so that chemists and medical doctors, for example, can interpret ‘Islamic’ principles as equals with scholars who have graduated from a traditional centre of learning. In Saudi Arabia critics draw equally on

the memoirs of Henry Kissinger and the sayings of the Prophet to challenge regime legitimacy.[16] This multiplication of voices in public discussion of religious and political belief further erodes the boundaries between kinds or sources of authoritative speech.

Religious discourse need not directly criticize state and established religious authorities to be considered oppositional. Direct interpretations of religious texts unmediated by ‘authoritative’, often regime-approved, scholars are seen as criticism of state authorities. In this respect ‘Islam’ is both a major source of social justice and a means of contesting entrenched claims to authority. The view that Islam needs only the renewal or replacement of those authorized to interpret it recalls the nineteenth-century reformist movements which emerged in the context of colonial domination. Where religious scholars once fiercely debated how to interpret legal traditions, such scholars are now often at the margin of today’s debates, which concern how to mobilize and interpret Islamic traditions and themes to support political actions involving large numbers of people, as is the case in countries as diverse as Algeria and Morocco, Iran and Saudi Arabia. The contexts in which these debates take place vary throughout the Muslim world, so one cannot reduce ‘Islamist’ tendencies to a few common criteria or, as some would have it, an ‘Islamic International’, analogous to the Comintern.[17] Kinds of books and other publications, publishers and other intermediaries, and ‘markets’ for ideas and audiences frame both possible messages and settings.

*** Books, Publishers, and Audiences: Defining Issues and Competing for Audiences Across the Muslim World

**** Turkey

The explosion of Islamist publishing in Turkey since the 1980s takes place in a context of aggressive and conscious cultural construction that has alternated between a secularist 61ite and increasingly vocal religious organizations and parties, political struggles between right and left, and a fading spectre of military intervention, which ended with an easing of religious censorship and control in order to foster conservative political

forces against the secular left. As in Egypt, the explosion of Islamic publishing in the 1980s coincided with the growth of the private economic sector, as the state, pursuing liberalization policies, relinquished direct control of parts of the economy. Because Turkish intellectuals claim that their nation is the most ‘Westernized’ of Middle Eastern countries, developments there are especially interesting to compare with trends elsewhere in the region.[18]

At one level, the rise of new Muslim intellectuals in Turkey, often from provincial towns and villages, mirrors the rise of their secular counterparts in an earlier generation.[19] Islamic intellectuals are the products of state schooling; many know European languages and have been exposed to Western influences. Many are media personalities rather than Islamic scholars and are regularly called on by the press and the broadcast media to represent the Islamic view and thus to take part in a Turkish ‘national conversation’ concerning how to be simultaneously Turkish and Muslim.

Turkey is permeated by the mass media, both state and commercial, so that publishers and broadcasters act as intermediaries between the producers and consumers of ideas. As elsewhere in the Middle East, mass education has profoundly influenced the tensions between liberal, national, and Turkish-Islamic traditions, and these tensions are played out in competition among publishers for markets. In the 1980s this ‘national conversation’ centred on the proper role of the state; now it concerns how the state relates to society and individuals. Outside Istanbul this conversation includes the members of Sufi groups with technical or engineering backgrounds, some of whom use print and the broadcast media to disseminate their ideas. From the vantage of participants in these debates, participation in Sufi movements fills the gap left by the Kemalist abandonment of ethics, moral issues, and questions about how to live.[20]

As an example of the need to adjust the conventional frameworks by which publishing trends and the rising appeal of Islamic publications are considered, several workshop participants suggested that the European distinction between popular and intellectual culture was less helpful in Turkey, where there is no such hard and fast line. Some Turks see the space created through media debates as a public middle ground between those

who wish to solidify ties with Europe and those who see Turkey’s quest for participation in Europe as turning away from Makka. Attitudes towards the Bosnian crisis have sharpened this debate. Other Turks see the polarity not as between Makka and Europe, but as away from Istanbul and towards a Turkish society in which all Turks participate as equals. The nature of Islam is not being debated; rather, Islam is being brought into debates about personal morality, social relations, and politics, although such debates remain circumspect on direct discussion of the legitimacy of state authority.

**** Indonesia

Islamic publishing in Indonesia, broad in market appeal and diverse in content, is closely tied to civic pluralism, an element of which is the belief among some Muslim thinkers that taiuhid, or belief in the oneness of God, requires an ongoing effort ‘to distinguish what is divine from what is merely human in Islamic tradition’ and hence a commitment to secularization—‘reason, knowledge, and science’. In this view, the Indonesian government might place restrictions on ‘political’ Islam but not on religion’s role ‘to serve as a source of ethical and cultural guidance’.[21] Since independence—de facto since 1946 and acknowledged by the Dutch in 1949—Indonesia has known only two presidents, but the unity of over 1700 islands and hundreds of ethnic and linguistic groups has been achieved at a price. Indonesians worry about what will happen after Suharto, who seized power in 1967 and was elected president in 1968. Some fear that Indonesia may suffer the same fate as Yugoslavia, although others argue that Indonesia has been more successful than other ethnically and linguistically diverse countries—including India, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka—in forging a national culture. Many also acknowledge a distinctively ‘island’—meaning South-east Asia— form of Islamic expression, distinct from that of the Middle East and continental Asia.

Islamic publishing in Indonesia has been part of long-standing private efforts to create and sustain religious schools (pesantaren) and the Islamic student movement. Both have strong support in Indonesia’s growing middle class. The pancasila, Indonesia’s official ideology, sets forth five moral and religious principles which encompass all of Indonesia’s recognized religions—Islam, Buddhism, Christianity, and Hinduism. Even if

regarded with scepticism by some intellectuals, the pancasila has officially encouraged religious pluralism in a country 90 per cent Muslim.

Religious pluralism in Indonesia has been encouraged by the lack of a clearly defined hierarchy among religious scholars—including Muslims, Christians, and Hindus—and by a recognition of the varied form of religious tradition among Muslims themselves.[22] Exposure to religious pluralism and the openness of many Muslims, especially those of the middle class, to innovation also encourage receptivity to outside currents. Fazlur Rahman, who called for a fresh look at Islamic scholarship, including the incorporation of social scientific inquiry, found his strongest audience among Western-educated Muslims.[23] By comparison, Indonesian Islamic thinkers—including those who have read Rahman's works in Indonesian translations—have shown a strong interest in the social sciences. They have translated the writings of Western commentators on Islam and argue that religious pluralism forms part of an established Islamic tradition of interreligious dialogue. In recent years the abstract commitment to religious tolerance has been joined with concrete issues of human rights and freedom of the press. The audience for these ideas is principally among the urban middle classes, which are attracted to the idea of civic pluralism—a notion sometimes castigated as a Western creation—in which Islam remains at the centre of social and political life.

**** Pakistan

Religious scholars who command traditional competence in Islamic law and doctrine in Pakistan are not at the forefront of popular Islamic discourse. Taking other Islamic scholars as their primary audiences, they have a mistrust of wider communication, leaving this field open to new Islamic intellectuals who work closely with newspapers. Abu l-'Ala' Mawdudi (1903–79) is perhaps the best-known pioneer of this trend, and his influence extends far beyond Pakistan. In Pakistan, however, the audience for such 'new' religious intellectuals appears to be predominantly urban Muslims with family backgrounds in towns and villages.

It is difficult to track publications, sales, and audiences in Pakistan. There is no obligatory legal deposit (copyright) system for books or other publications, and the distribution of books is often done through networks of political or religious allies rather than through periodical or book distributors. The direct market for popular Islamist writing is further restricted by an illiteracy rate of 65 per cent and by the consequences of an educational system that compartmentalizes students into incompatible educational tracks: Urdu-language madrasa education, with an emphasis on traditional religious education; Urdu-language state schools that separate students into science and arts tracks; and English-language schools, mostly private, that also separate students into tracks. Of these various schooling choices, the strongest audience for Islamist literature seems to be among students and graduates of the Urdu-language science track.

Books and pamphlets appear less to persuade new audiences than to reconfirm party and sect supporters in their ideas. Many are unsigned, identified only by a graphic or typographical cover style associated with the sponsoring group. Many publications are subsidized, although it is difficult to ascertain their scope and extent.

Despite subsidies and the pervasive sponsorship of publications by interest groups, pubfishers are aware of shifts in audience interests and concerns and local preferences. Women’s and rights issues have become increasingly important, as suggested by a 1995 survey of seven Islamic bookshops in Lahore and three in Islamabad.[24] In both cities the best sellers included Qur’anic commentary (tafsTr), jurisprudence (fiqh), history and biography, religious fiction and short stories, Islamic medicine and magic, apologetics, and books on women and women’s issues. In Islamabad Qur’anic commentaries—especially Mawdudi, the Deobandi religious leader Mufti S. Shafiq, and the Barelwi leader Karim Shah — led other types of books in sales, followed by Islamic history and biography, and short stories and novels with Islamic themes. In Lahore, an old commercial and industrial centre, the best-selling books were Islamic history, followed in descending order by novels and short stories with Islamic themes, general histories and biographies, Islamic jurisprudence, Qur’anic commentary, and books on Sufism and Islamic medicine.

**** Bangladesh

Secularist and Islamic publishers compete for the same audiences in Bangladesh, and the organizations that sponsor publications are also active in the broadcast media, audio cassettes, and video rentals. At the National Book Fair in Dhaka in February 1995 Islamist and secular publishers exhibited side by side, although, in general, Islamic publishers lack the financial resources of their secular counterparts. Many religious publications reach small audiences in Bangladesh because they are expensive, although short devotional (masalla) texts enjoy wide popularity. A recent development is Islamic fiction, which, since the early 1990s, has competed head-on with works by secular writers, including Tasleema Nasrin, a Bangla writer perceived as hostile to Islam who is living as a political refugee in Europe. Accentuating this competition for audiences, the cover designs of secularist and Islamic romances often converge. Glossy covers and dramatic designs predominate in both, but the Islamic designs are less provocative, and the calligraphy usually incorporates religious features. Secular and Islamic books circulate in separate bookshops, however, suggesting a compartmentalization of reading habits and audiences similar to that prevailing in Pakistan and, to a lesser extent, in Egypt, and perhaps an appeal to distinct groups. Even if this is the case, the partial convergence of Islamic books with their secular counterparts suggests a ‘crossover’ into a larger market and, as in Turkey, the emergence of a shared social space.

**** Morocco

Islamic books have the most readership among university students and recent graduates. In the 1960s leftist student movements predominated, but as Arabization of higher education expanded in the 1970s, Islamic and Islamist-dominated groups came to the fore. Islamist student groups are divided between those that stress the need for radical and imminent change to achieve social justice and those that stress reform and renovation through persuasion. Both tendencies are represented in the science and medical faculties, as well as in the departments of Islamic studies, founded at each of Morocco’s thirteen regional universities in the 1980s. Of Morocco’s public universities, only the oldest— in Fez and Rabat—have departments of philosophy which teach non-Islamic themes, including European

philosophical traditions, and the number of students in these two departments has dropped precipitously. When students could hope for secondary and university posts, these departments had hundreds of students; in 1994 each had fewer than a dozen.

Three kinds of religious books circulate in student milieux: Qur'anic commentary (those of Sayyid Qutb of the Muslim Brotherhood, executed by Nasser in 1966, remain the most popular); pamphlets that explain Islam as a religion, way of life, and form of government; and books which address family problems and the role of women in society. Outside university circles, religious books which challenge or defend certain Sufi practices continue to enjoy popularity.

While universities are a locus of growing Islamist movements, which might best be characterized as projects of Islamist interpretation, Morocco's popular Islam, including its focus on the Sharifian monarchy as the authoritative interpreter of Islamic tradition, maintains a strong hold outside the universities on the religious imagination of an older generation and mutes the direct political appeal of Islamism.[25] What seems significant in this context is that the rise of the Islamic book in Morocco, as elsewhere, is related to the new audiences created by mass education and the conjuncture with the fragmentation of religious and political authority associated with them.[26]

*** Communications Technology and Its Discontents

As mentioned above, the economics of publication have radically changed in the last two decades. While the start-up costs for publication remained formidable even at mid-century, in recent years it has become possible to compose newspapers on personal computers. In Morocco, for example, some regional Islamist newspapers are produced almost single-handedly by their proprietors, who distribute them as a sideline, although most have wider backing. Larger-scale newspapers and printing ventures are able to aim for a middle-class readership with sufficient disposable income to purchase periodicals and also to attract advertisers. Often paper, production, and

distribution costs, in which distributors receive at least half of the retail cost of publications, become the most formidable expenses.

While advertising, market forces, and technological change facilitate the entry of new voices into the public sphere, censorship continues to disable or circumscribe them. Censorship takes many forms. Some Gulf states have as many as three organizations for censoring books, periodicals, and videos, and the action of any one organization suffices to block an import, delete an article, or alter a word. Yet the direct control of writers or their products is only one device available to censors. As in the case of prepublication review, censorship ceases to be effective when producers ‘migrate’ to the smaller media of photocopied broadsheets, such as the shab-name (‘night letters’) prevalent in Iran’s and Afghanistan’s revolutions or to other, less formal means of distribution. The accelerated speed of publication (in computer composition compared to lithography, for instance) also limits opportunities for prepublication censorship. A second censoring mechanism is the threat to seize offending literature, which obliges publishers and importers to exercise caution in committing themselves to controversial titles, since the seizure of an entire press run or shipment of imported books or periodicals may entail substantial loss.[27] More subtle controls include limiting the supply of newsprint or offering ‘guidance’ to editors on how to handle news stories or themes. Usually the limits of toleration are negotiable — wide-circulation newspapers, for example, are often more strictly controlled than small journals.

Censorship decisions are often capricious. Thus a collection of articles on Islam which appeared uncensored in Lebanon during the author’s lifetime was banned when gathered into a posthumous edited volume.[28] And books once banned, such as Muhammad al-Shahrur’s al-Kitab wa-l-Qur’an [The Book and the Qur’an], become ‘unbanned’ with a change in the political situation, which, in the case of Egypt, followed the assassination of journalist Faraj Fuda (d. 1992), for which Islamists claimed responsibility.[29]

As channels for communication have multiplied, printed messages, broadcast messages, and those circulated via video and audio cassettes, fax, and computer disk increasingly reinforce one another. Governments and religious

authorities which seek to ban messages in one medium find them reappearing in others, especially when censorship efforts call attention to them. Books that go underground, and forbidden literature in general, necessarily imply networks of complicity; prior to the Iranian revolution, sermons circulating on audio cassettes attracted more serious notice when the security forces began monitoring congregational sermons. Faxes make possible the international transmission of religious and political tracts and, in the case of affluent Saudi Arabia, become a significant channel for internationalizing religious protest by allowing dissidents within the country easy access to supporters elsewhere.

As messages migrate between media, they take on new life and change the market of public discourse, even reconfiguring the boundaries of what is ‘public’. Faxing a fatwa places it outside the conventional frames of interpretation that many consider essential. Just as the switch to more accessible styles of writing, exemplified in the writings of Sayyid Qutb, increases their audience or reaches new ones, so do switches to other media, such as audio cassettes and computers. A shipment of books is more easily stopped by alert customs officials than a diskette with a banned text, and as the Middle East becomes ‘wired’ to the information age of networked computers, the ‘craft’ of censorship becomes increasingly overwhelmed.

Middle Eastern governments and Elites already struggle with the issues of controlling the flow of information via international satellitebased broadcasting.[30] The issue is becoming more acute as research-based international computing networks become central to various medical and scientific fields in which professionals must participate to maintain their skills. These challenges include both cultural (pornography and other ‘foreign’ entertainment) and political threats.

Throughout much of the Middle East there is much political discussion in private; discussion in ‘open’ media, however, remains circumscribed. Particularly in the Gulf a ‘politics of silence’ prevails, where political dissent and criticism are channelled through networks of trusted friends, rarely to emerge in public media.[31] The only public response to political events is silence or muted praise, which carry clear messages in their narrow publics. Even in the Gulf context, however, the facility with which messages can cross

borders means that religious and political debates become increasingly public, exposing their participants to wider audiences, even if ‘publication’ is limited to smuggled documents or multiple faxes. Modern, especially electronic, communications of all kinds overcome limitations of time and space and vastly extend the reach of private communication.

The multitude of channels created by satellite broadcasting turns passive viewers into consumers; similarly, computer networking fosters ‘virtual’ communities that also attain an international arena in which exiles and expatriates are active.[32] Governments and religious authorities are not the only groups to evince reservations about new media for this reason: traditional and ‘liberal’ Elites, whose privileged positions are tied to particular intellectual technologies and practices, are equally uneasy about having their positions undercut by the democratization or ‘massification’ of communications.

The ‘tabooing mentality’ (dhihniyya al-tahrim) derives not from the state or the religious establishment alone but is potential in any claim to authoritative interpretation.[33] Secularists often emerge as hardly less doctrinaire than religious extremists, both of whom claim the authority to interpret or condemn. In such contexts socially ‘tabooed’ literatures are often indistinct from officially forbidden books, and a sort of privatized censorship prevails. Traditionally educated religious scholars, like the beneficiaries of elite education, see a threat in popular books and pamphlets, which encourage intolerance, just as those ‘from below’ resent Mite efforts at ‘guidance’ as unjustified censorship or control.

*** Conclusion

‘Islamic’ books do not ‘catch on’ simply because their producers have found themes which resonate with the new audiences created through mass education and mass communications. The shifting mix of print, broadcast, audio, video, electronic media, poster art, and word-of-mouth communications entails a complex array of personal and institutional intermediaries and disseminators. This is so even when messages appear direct. (By ‘institutional’ we mean conventional and accepted means of

achieving certain tasks in a given society and not necessarily formally established, legally sanctioned arrangements for communicating and distributing messages.) Some intermediaries in disseminating messages build on conventional and established vehicles of communication, although audiences listening to state-controlled radio and television or to government-provided cinema newsreels often respond with irony to the messages communicated.[34] A shift to assessing the means by which messages get transmitted, disseminated, and understood can offer insight into the range of possible messages and the potential for persuasion.

Indeed, even the repressive apparatus of state censorship is limited by the ways that messages get labelled. Egypt's Shaykh 'Umar 'Abd al-Rahman, tried in Egypt for incitement to assassinate Anwar al-Sadat, was acquitted because his messages were labelled as religious and not as calls to political action.[35] Similarly, messages and texts may serve as symbols for styles of religious and political expression, as much valued for display—copies of Sayyid Qutb's Qur'anic commentary in a bookcase or a Qur'an on top of a television set, for example—as for their content. These display items, like a cassette religious sermon in a taxi, may exemplify a particular religious orientation. Few Middle Easterners purchase books with matching colours for interior decorating, as did Imelda Marcos, but many liberals are likely to purchase large books such as Muhammad Shahrur's Al-Kitab wa-l-Qur'an to display rather than to read.[36] Becoming a 'better' Muslim may also be signified by media consumption profiles. There are no publicly known Middle Eastern or Muslim counterparts to such US political media consultants as Roger Ailes or Ed Rollins, but some Muslim and Middle Eastern communications 'specialists' show a brilliance for orchestrating different media—including the small media of informal, 'deniable' communications—to achieve their goals.

Governments and propagandists recognize these connections, even if they are reluctant to disclose exactly how they accomplish their task. State efforts to control or influence the international media are known in some detail; less well known are efforts to control domestic media, especially those used when states succeed in blocking formal channels of communication. On occasion, states authorize experiments in transmitting such messages, as is the case with Moroccan efforts to heighten AIDS awareness and prevention through private committees, survey research, and person-to-person outreach.

Despite the diversity of contexts suggested above, the dynamics of communications among exiles, refugees, and Muslim communities in Europe and North America suggest certain ‘family resemblances’. Thus, Egypt’s economic liberalization (jnfitah) resembles the Ozal period in Turkey: both set the stage for an explosion of Islamist publication (albeit with rather different causes and dynamics) and broadcasting in Turkey’s case. Print plays a major role in all contexts, but broadcasting, with greater expense and organization, implies access to a wider public. This induces moderation in what is said and, in turn, influences the predominant forms of political action. Lebanon’s Hizbullah, for example, now has al-Manar television, a commercial service reputed to be Beirut’s most popular.[37] By entering the wider public arena, party- and sect-based broadcasters are obliged to speak in terms of selfconsciously constructed national styles to win approval for their messages. In Indonesia, where schools and religious institutions are the principal setting for Islamist discourse and publication, discussions of how to lead a Muslim life entail an effort to relate to a state-directed Indonesian nationalism, more than would be the case if such discussions were banned or outlawed.

These cases also underscore a point evident in preliminary surveys of Bangladesh and Moroccan readerships: the objects and contexts of Islamist impulses and expressions focus on social and moral issues, not narrow political ones. The search for Islamic answers and Islamic consciousness is not state-focused but more general, although states are aware that any form of organization not directly under their control or authorized by them has political implications. In 1992 a Moroccan official confidently asserted to one of the authors that Morocco had no Islamist movements because none had been authorized by the Ministry of the Interior. By 1994 the same official recognized that movements with important political ramifications could exist, even if not recognized in the narrow legal sense of prevailing Moroccan legislation.[38]

Pluralism is already a practical reality. Liberal theorists who rejoice at this development must still be troubled by the seeming intolerance and absolutism of some expressions of religious and political beliefs and values. Liberals, radicals, and conservatives alike search Islamic texts, tenets,

practices, and conventions for affirmations and rejections of pluralism. Practical participation in a plural, multivocal world is not the same as acknowledging or even embracing it. Liberals can thus misread Islamist tendencies, in part because of their own conventions of expression. They prematurely assimilate Islamist messages and their significance to known frames of reference, when they should be looking more intently at the means by which messages are disseminated. This requires attention to the middle ground between thinker-creators of ideologies and their audiences—those intermediaries who channel communication, the media that carry messages, and disseminators who shape the 'market appeal' of ideas which otherwise might reach only a limited number of persons. We need to identify these intermediaries, but we also need to identify how the messages are read, heard, and understood.

Many voices may be heard without implying development of civil society and pluralism as culturally valued in its own right. The sensitivity of this debate is registered in the anxiety of both state and non-state boundary-keepers, government censors and self-declared liberals, over the advantages of unrestricted expression against those restrictions 'necessary' to preserve personal and collective morality and integrity.

Identifying and understanding these processes of communication and their relation to how political and religious authority are increasingly fragmented require focusing on intermediaries and disseminators, as well as the conditions in which messages are created, circulated, and understood. These conditions include the exigencies of publishing in liberalizing economies, the emergence of previously dormant or suppressed non-^lite religious understandings into the public sphere, the implications of newly available and expanding technologies, and the transference of authority from one medium to another that accompanies the migration of messages and messengers.

Awareness of the understandings made possible through the multiple perspectives suggested by Bahktin's 'excess of seeing' may not establish or advance the prospects for civic pluralism. It does, however, provide a context in which practices are made more apparent, so that they can be compared and put together with the 'larger' but more evanescent variables of ideology,

on the one hand, and forces of political economy, on the other. Focusing on the intermediaries, the practicalities of publication, and audiences moves us away from generalizing on ideological and political trends on the basis of text and is a step away from texts alone and towards finding out how ideas are successfully conveyed and understood.

[1] See Dale F. Eickelman, ‘Mass Higher Education and the Religious Imagination in Contemporary Arab Societies’, American Ethnologist, 19: 4 (November 1992), 1–13; Jon W. Anderson, ‘Cybarites, Knowledge Workers and New Creoles on the Information Superhighway’, Anthropology Today, 20 (August 1995), 13–15; and Dale F. Eickelman and James Piscatori, Muslim Politics (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1996), 108–35.

[2] Robert W. Hefner, ‘Islam, State, and Civil Society: ICMI and the Struggle for the Indonesian Middle Class’, Indonesia, 56 (October 1993), 1–3.

[3] See Augustus Richard Norton, ‘The Future of Civil Society in the Middle East’, The Middle East Journal, 47: 2 (Spring 1993); Laurie Brand, ‘“In the Beginning was the State...”: The Quest for Civil Society in Jordan’, in Civil Society in the Middle East, ed. Augustus Richard Norton (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1995), 148–85; Ghassan Salatn£, ed., Democracy without Democrats? The Renewal of Politics in the Muslim World (London: I. B. Tauris, 1994); and Siverine Labat, ‘Le Maghreb vers 1’explosion?’ in Exits et royaumes: Les appartenances au monde arabo-musulman aujourd’hui, ed. Gilles Kepel (Paris: Presses de la Fondation Nationale des Sciences Politiques, 1994), 41–67.

[4] The workshop was funded by the Humanities Program of the Rockefeller Foundation, New York, under a grant awarded to Dartmouth College, and by the Rockefeller Foundation’s Bellagio Study and Conference Center. Dale F. Eickelman was project director and Jon W. Anderson the workshop

rapporteur. Participants included Jamal Amiar (Editor, Les Nouvelles du Nord, Tangier); Leo Bogart (Obor Foundation); Clifford Chanin (Rockefeller Foundanon); Evelyn A. Early (anthropologist); Yves Gonzalez-Quijano (University Lumiire 2, Lyon); Robert W. Hefner (Boston University); Maimuna Huq (Bangladesh National Women Lawyers' Association); Ibrahim Karawan (Institute of Strategic Studies, London); Laith M. Kubba (Al-Khoei Foundation, London); Nurcholish Madjid (Wakaf Paramadina Foundation, Jakarta); Muhammad Khalid Masud (Islamic Research Institute, Islamabad); Michael A. Meeker (University of California, San Diego); Abdelrhani Moundib (University Mohamed V, Rabat); Ahmad S. Moussalli (American University of Beirut); James Piscatori (Council on Foreign Relations, New York); Armando Salvatore (UniversitSt Humboldt, Berlin); Mohammad Sammak (Editor, Ijtihad, Beirut); Sadek Jawad Sulaiman (Washington); and Hakan Yavuz (University of Wisconsin, Madison). Raman Srinivasan, Warren Weaver Fellow at the Rockefeller Foundation, observed the conference. Jane R. Langdell, Dartmouth College, was conference assistant, and Christine Eickelman was conference administrator. Deborah Hodges and Richard B. Parker generously commented on an earlier version of this article. To facilitate discussion and debate, conference participants agreed in advance that no statements would be directly or indirectly attributed to specific individuals. Not to have done so would have restricted the ability of several participants to engage in unrestricted discussion.

[5] For a study which traces the rise of the 'Islamic' book in Egypt since the 1970s, see Yves Gonzalez-Quijano, 'Les Gens du livre. Champ intellectuel et Edition dans 1'tgypte ripublicaine (1952–1993)', Thise de doctorat de 1'Institut dTtudes Politiques de Paris, Mention Sciences Politiques, 1994; Frederick C. Huxley, 'Opposition Press Leads in Morocco, with French-language Dailies Drawing More Elite Leadership', working paper, United States Information Service, Office of Research, Near Eastern, South Asian, and African Branch, September 1989, and his 'Most Urban Moroccans Tune to Domestic Radio and TV Regularly: 40 Percent Also Say They Listen to Foreign Radio', United States Information Service, Office of Research, Near Eastern, South Asian, and African Branch, March 1990. These two papers are based on a survey of 2279 urban and rural adults conducted by the French firm SECODIP in Morocco, from 28 October to 27 November 1988. Their questionnaire neglected to ask about exposure to religious books and programming, but it remains one of the few studies based on audiences and readers in the Arab world. In addition, two papers were prepared especially

for the Bellagio conference: Maimuna Huq, ‘Masala and Saints to History and Fiction: Islam, Politics, and Religious Writings in Bangladesh’; and Abdelrhani Moundib, ‘Islamic Books and Their Readers in Central Morocco’. On the shift from author-centred understandings of texts (and orality) to reader- and listener-centred ones, see Jonathan Boyarin, ed., The Ethnography of Reading (Berkeley and Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press, 1993).

[6] Mikhail Mikhailovich Bakhtin, Art and Answerability: Early Philosophical Essays by M. M. Bakhtin, ed. Michael Holquist and Vadim Liapunov, trans. Vadim Liapunov (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 1990), 22–7.

[7] Computer-network ‘bulletin boards’ or newsgroups on the Internet prove fertile grounds for political-cultural debate for overseas Middle Easterners. See Anderson, ‘Cybarites’.

[8] See Annabelle Srebemy-Mohammadi and Ali Mohammadi, Small Media, Big Revolution: Communication, Culture, and the Iranian Revolution (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1994).

[9] Hamid Naficy, The Making of Exile Cultures: Iranian Television in Los Angeles (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1993), 69–70.

[10] Francis Robinson, ‘Technology and Religious Change: Islam and the Impact of Print’, Modem Asian Studies, 27:1 (1993), 229–51.

[11] James C. Scott, Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1990), xiii.

[12] On television images, see especially Susan Ossman, Picturing Casablanca: Portraits of Power in a Moroccan City (Berkeley and Los

Angeles, CA: University of California Press, 1994); on the uses of mass literacy and variations in it, see Daniel Wagner, Literacy, Culture, and Development: Becoming Literate in Morocco (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993).

[13] For example, see Fayad E. Kazan, Mass Media, Modernity, and Development: Arab States of the Gulf (Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers, 1993); and Ami Ayalon, The Press in the Arab Middle East: A History (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995). On broadcasting, see Douglas A. Boyd, Broadcasting in the Arab World: A Survey of Radio and Television (Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 1982); and Yahya Kamilpour and Hamid Mowlana, eds., Mass Media in the Middle East: A Comprehensive Handbook (Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers, 1994). On Muslim world broadcast media, especially international communications, see Hamid Mowlana, ‘Radio and Television’, in Encyclopedia of the Modern Islamic World, ed. John Esposito (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), iii. 405–7.

[14] Yves Gonzalez-Quijano, Les Gens du livre-, and ‘Les Livres islamiques: histoires ou mythes?’, Peuples Mediterran/ees, 56–7 (July-December 1991), 283—92.

[15] For examples, see Gonzalez-Quijano, Les Gens du livre, 388, 457.

[16] For example, see Safar al-Hawali, Kashf al-gumma ‘an ‘ulama’ al-umma; risala min al-Shaykh Safar al-Hawati ila al-Shaykh ‘Abd al-‘Avz bin Baz [The unveiling of distress about the ‘ulama’-, a letter from Shaykh Safar al-Hawati to Shaykh ‘Abd al-‘Aziz bin Baz] (n. p.: Dar al-Hikma, 1991), 16, 69, 71, 75–9, 83, 101, 131.

[17] See Xavier Raufer, ‘Une “Internationale islamique”?’, L’Express, 27 July 1995, 18–19, who argues against the view

that there is a radical ‘Islamintcm’ replacement for the ‘Comintern’ of an earlier era.

[18] Sec especially Richard Tapper, ed., Islam in Modem Turkey: Religion, Politics and Literature in a Secular State (London: I. B. Tauris, 1991).

[19] Michael E. Meeker, ‘The New Muslim Intellectuals in the Republic of Turkey’, in Islam in Modem Turkey, ed. Tapper, 189–219.

[20] Nilttfer Gflle, Musulmanes et modemes: voile et civilisation en Turquie (Paris: Editions la Decouverte, 1993), 51–86; and Jenny B. White, ‘Islam and Democracy: The Turkish Experience’, Current History (January 1995), 7—12.

[21] See Robert W. Hefner, ‘Islam, State, and Civil Society: ICMI and the Struggle for the Indonesian Middle Class’, Indonesia, 56 (October 1993), 4, 6; and his The Political Economy of Mountain Java: An Interpretive History (Berkeley and Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press, 1990).

[22] See, for example, John R. Bowen, Muslims through Discourse: Religion and Ritual in Gayo Society (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1993), 315–30.

[23] Fazlur Rahman, Islam and Modernity: Transformations of an Intellectual Tradition (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1982).

[24] Prepared for the Bellagio workshop. A published version is in preparation.

[25] See Dale F. Eickelman, Knowledge and Power in Morocco: The Education of a Twentieth-Century Notable (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1985); and Elaine Combs-Schilling, Sacred Performances: Islam, Sexuality, and Sacrifice (New York: Columbia University Press, 1989), 291–309.

[26] See Dale F. Eickelman, ‘Re-Imagining Religion and Politics: Moroccan Elections in the 1990s’, in Islamism and Secularism in North Africa, ed. John Reudy (New York: St Martin’s Press, 1994), 253–73; and Mounia Bennani-Chralbi, Soumis et rebelles: les jeunes au Maroc (Paris: CNRS Editions, 1994), 27–54.

[27] Morocco, which claims to have dismantled its censorship apparatus, maintains a desk and fax machine at the airport hangar where incoming publications arrive. Questionable articles—usually involving reporting on the country itself—are faxed to the appropriate ministry for a decision. If it is negative, the entire issue is seized. In other cases, especially publications originating in France, recommendations for censorship are passed to the Moroccan embassy in Paris, which then recommends seizure of specific periodicals on arrival in Morocco. In principle, postal copies are similarly treated, although the slowness of postal delivery usually means that interdiction orders are not as systematically enforced. In contrast, Saudi Arabia engages in micro-censorship, blacking out offensive advertisements and removing offending pages.

[28] The book in question is al-Sadiq al-Nayhum, Islam dudd al-Islam [Islam against Islam] (London and Beirut: Riyad El-Rayyes Books, 1994).

[29] On the popularity of Shahrur’s work, see Dale F. Eickelman, ‘Islamic Liberalism Strikes Back’, Middle East Studies Association Bulletin, 27:2 (December 1993), 163–8.

[30] This was one of the major issues raised at the 20th Annual Symposium of the Center for Contemporary Arab Studies,

Georgetown University, ‘The Information Revolution in the Arab World: Commercial, Cultural, and Political Dimensions’, 20–1 April 1995.

[31] On the ‘politics of silence’, see Brigitte Waterdrinker, ‘Genise et construction d’un 6tdt modeme: le cas du Sultanat d’Oman’, Memoire de DEA, Etudes Politiques, Institut d’ttudes Politiques de Paris, 1993, 52—61.

[32] See Jon W. Anderson, ‘New Creoles of the Information Superhighway: The Middle Eastern Diaspora on the Internet’, in The Telecommunications Revolution in the Arab World, ed. Michael Hudson (New York: St Martin’s Press, forthcoming).

[33] The phrase is taken from Sadiq Jalal al-‘Azm, Dhihniyya al-Tahnm: Salman RushdT wa-Haqiqat al-Adab [The Tabooing Mentality: Salman Rushdie and the Truth about Literature], 2nd ed. (Nicosia: Center for Socialist Studies and Research in the Arab World, 1994).

[34] See Walter Armbrust, ‘Watching the Audience Watch Films: Egyptian Cinema in the Theatre’, paper delivered at the 28th Annual Meeting of the Middle East Studies Association, Phoenix, Arizona, 19–22 November 1994, in the session, ‘Printing and Mass Communication in Muslim Societies’.

[35] ‘A Profile of Shaikh ‘Umar *Abd al-Rahman’, TransState Islam, 1:1 (Spring 1995), 10.

[36] Personal communicarion, Asad AbuKhalil, 20 July 1995.

[37] ‘Holy Message from the Front’, The Economist, 25 February 1995, 42.

[38] DFE interviews with a senior Moroccan official, Rabat, 16 April 1992 and 21 July 1994.

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*** Contents

2 Editor’s Letter

4 Notes on Contributors

8 introduction

Jan Nederveen Pieterse and Habibui Haque Khondker

15 Views from Dubai: Oriental Globalization Revisited. Jan Nederveen Pieterse

39 Three Phases of Globalization: The Significance of Dubai’s Emergence as a Trading Hub. Roger Ballard

73 The Rise of Dubai: A Social History of the Commercial Cities in the Gulf. Aqil Kazim

101 Abu Dhabi’s G’obal Economy: Integration and Innovation.

Christopher Davidson

129 Are Today’s Globalized Cathedrals of Consumption Tomorrow’s Global Dinosaurs? George Ritzer

153 The Arao World, the Global Moment and the Struggle over Reoresentation. Lena Jayyusi

185 Mainstreaming Islam: Taking Charge of the Faith. Dale Eickelman

205 Wanted but not Welcome: Social Determinants of Labor Migration in the UAE. Habibui Haque Khondker

235 Negotiating Migrant Status in the Emerging Global City:

Britons in Dubai. Katie Walsh

*** Editor’s Letter

Rafael Reyes-Ruiz

This second number of Encounters appears in print after the turbulence of the global financial downturn, which affected economic performance in the Gulf. It offers different perspectives and theorizations an the historical, social, cultural, and economic factors that have shaped the region. Our front and back covers feature sections of artwork by Zayed University students in the Department of Art and Design, which serves as an introduction to the reflections of some of our contributors on the spectacular growth of cities in the region, where the majority of the population, local and expatriates, now live. The cranes depicted on the front cover, an ubiquitous feature of the ever changing Dubai urbanscape emerge from a structure reminiscent of a wind tower, itself testimony of the transnational flows from across the Gulf, which have been part of the social, cultural and economic life of the city. The artwork was exhibited in the Bastakiya historical district, notable for its reconstructed and restored wind towers, as part of a fringe art fair linked to Art Dubai, an international art event organized to put Dubai on the art world map.

A related aspect of the global flows discussed by contributors albeit not addressed directly and worthy of note is the expansion of the educational sector in the Gulf. In the last five years, several local and foreign universities have either opened new campuses or added new programs in the region, most notably in the UAE and Qatar, and an increase is expected driven by demograohic growth and the needs of the regional economy. This semester at Zayed University, for example, we saw the creation of new academic units such as tne Diplomatic Academy, the College of International and Advanced Studies, and a new major in Emirati Studies, all orograms that will surely lead to new research piojects and result in publications which we may see in

these pages in the future. Stimulated by this expected growth, we are open and look forward to new editorial projects and extend invitations to all universities and research institutes in the UEA, the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) region, and beyond to collaborate on future research and publishing ventures.

This number of Encounters is also the first publication to bear the imprint of Zayed University Press (ZU Press), which has been created to promote and publish schdarly and creative materials through books, journals, and electronic media, with particular emphasis on --but not exclusive to-- topics related to the Gulf and the Middle East. ZU Press will henceforth manage this journal. Under this new arrangement, Encounters will continue with the special number format, issued both as a periodical and as book with its own ISBN number for the foreseeable future. At present, Nobuko Adachi of Illinois State University is gathering articles for Encounters number three due in November 2010, which will focus on East Asian transnational flows in the Middle East and Africa. We expect Peier van der Veer, who will make a short visit to Zayed University this year, to edit number f_{our} due j_n May of 2011 on transnational religious networks, and are considering a proposal for a future number on interfaith relations in the Middle East and another on globalization, tourism and identity.

Apart from the co-editors of this number and the authors published here, I wish to thank Charilyn Ronquillo, our editorial assistant for Encounters number one, who moved to the office of the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, and welcome Fatma A’Shehhi, a graduate of the College of Communication and Media Science, who has already assisted with many editorial and production tasks related to the publication of this number. I hope that with future growth we’ll see more students and graduates participate in editorial projects. Many thanks to Tina Sleiman who worked on the visual identity of the journal and who makes sure all design details are in place before going to print.

Interestingly, and perhaps ironically, we experienced some minor bumps and delays in the production of the journal reminding us that the very global flows we theorize and describe are often made possible by technologies that may fail for different and unexpected reasons also related to globalization. On several occasions our copyeditors, one in Mumbai, the other in Pittsburgh, experienced weather-related power outages that delayed their work; a visit by a scholar from Singapore related to future editorial projects was cancelled because of air travel disturbances in the North Atlantic caused by volcanic ash; and at one point our internet communications were slowed down because an underwater telecommunications cable had been severed in the Mediterranean. These obstacles notwithstanding, the authors, reviewers, editors and copyeditors worked together, virtually, to ensure the highest quality possible for this encounter with scholarship on globalization and the Gulf.

*** Notes on Contributors

Jan Nederveen Pieterse is Mellichamp Professor of Global Studies and Sociology at the University of California, Santa Barbara. He specializes in globalization, develooment studies, and cultural studies, ana has published many books and articles on these topics. He has been visiting professor in Argentina, Brazil, China, Germany. India, Indonesia, Japan, Pakistan, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sweden, and Thailand. He edits the Routledge Studies in Emerging Societies andthe book series NewTrends in Globalization, published bv Palgrave Macmillan. He is advisory editor of Ethnicities, European Journal of Social Theory, Globalizations, Third Text, Encounters, and journal of Social Affairs. URL: www iannederveenpieterse.com

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of Global Studies (University of Illinois), Encounters (Zayed University), and Journal of Classical Sociology (Sage).

Roger Ballard is an anthropologist with a longstanding interest in the dynamics of diasporic networks emanating from South Asia, and especially those from the Punjab, whose development he has been exploring firsthand for the oast four decades. Over the years he has oublished numerous papers on the basis of his observations, Having retired from his post as Senior Lecturer in Applied South Asian Studies at the University of Manchester some years ago, he currently heads up the independent Centre for Applied South Asian Studies (CASAS).

Aqil Kazim is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Sociology at the United Arab Emirates University of Al Ain, UAE. Dr. Kazim received his MA and PhD from American University, Washington, D.C. He is the author of The United Arab Emirates AD 600 to the Present: A Socio-Discursive Transformation in the Arabian Gulf (Gulf Book Center, 2000).

Christopher M, Davidson is a senior lecturer in Middle East Politics at Durham University in the United Kingdom. Before joining Durham, he was an assistant professor at Zayed University in the UAE, first at the Abu Dhabi campus, then in Dubai. He is also a fellow of the UK Higher Education Academy. In 2009,. he was a Visiting Associate Professor at Kyoto University, Japan. He is co-editor of the book series Power and Politics in the Gulf, published simultaneously by Columbia University Press (in the U.S.) and Hurst & Co (in the U.K.). His single-authored books include Dubai: The Vulnerability of Success, Abu Dhabi: Oil and Beyond, and The United Arab Emirates: A Study in Survival. He is a United Nations (Alliance of Civilizations) and Middle East Policy Council expert on tne Gulf monarchies, notably the UAE, with a secondary interest in Lebanese polices.

George Ritzer is Distinguished University Professor at the University of Maryland Among his awards are: Honorary Doctorate from La Trobe University, Melbourne, Australia; Honorary Patron, University Philosophical Society, Trinity College, Dublin, Ireland; and the American Sociological Association’s Distinguished Contribution to Teaching Award. Among his books are The Globalization of Nothing (2nd ed., 2007); The McDonaldization of Society (5th ed., 2008); Enchanting a Disenchanted World (3rd ed., 2C10); and Globalization: A Basic Text (2010), the last his most recent book. He is currently working on The Outsourcing of Everything (with Craig Lair, Oxford, forthcoming). He was founding editor of the Journal of Consumer Culture He has edited the two-volume Encyclopedia of Social Theory (2005); the eleven-volume Encyclopedia of Sociology (2007); and The Blackwell Companion to Globalization (2008). He is currently editing the Encyclopedia of Globalization (forthcoming). Current essays deal with the “prosumer” (one who simultaneously produces and consumes), especially on Web 2.0 sites such as Wikipedia and Facebook, and he is editing a special doubleissue of the American Behavioral Scientist on that topic His books have been translated into over twenty languages, with over a dozen translations of The McDonaldization of Society alone.

Lena Jayyusi is Associate Professor in the College of Communication and Media Sciences, at Zayed University, Dubai. She is also Senior Research Associate with Muwatin: The Palestinian Institute for the Study of Democracy, in Ramallah, Palestine She was Chair of the.Department of Communication Studies at Cedar Crest College in Pennsylvania from 1990–94. and then an Annenberg Scholar at the Annenberg School for Communication at the University of Pennsylvania. With an SSRC (USA) fellowship and Ford Foundation grants she conducted research on broadcasting in Palestine between 1995 and 2002. She also served as Senior TOKTEN consultant for the United Nations Program for Development in Jerusalem on med’a and curricular issues and was Director of the Oral History Program at Shaml: The Palestinian Diaspora and Refugee Center. Author of Categorization and the Moral Order (Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1984) to be oublished in French in 2010, she has published on visuality, language, media and politics, national discourse and identity, and memory studies. Her edited collection Jerusalem Interrupted: Modernity and

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** Introduction

Jan Nederveen Pieterse and Habibul Khondker

This special issue arises from the second Global Studies conference, which focused on the Middle East and Twenty-first-century Globalization and took place at Zayed University, Dubai in May 2009.[1] Papers have been revised and/or commissioned for this volume. Several concerns drive this special issue—developments in studies of globalization, the rise of emerging societies, the role of nodal cities, the new Silk Road, and dynamics in the Middle East and the Gulf.

In studies of globalization, a long-term concern has been to develop understandings that avoid and overcome Eurocentric, West-centric approaches to globalization. In this regard, long and deep histories of globalization, as in the work of William McNeill and Marshall Hodgson, as well as developments in global history (Mazlish and Buultiens 1993; Hopkins 2002; Mazlish 2006) have been major contributions. Other contributions have been studies of the Middle East (such as Abu-Lughod 1989), histories of commerce in the Indian Ocean, and Andre Gunder Frank's study ReOrient (Chaudhuri 1985; Frank 1998). Several of tnese strands come together in John Hobson's work on the eastern origins of Western civilization (2004).

From these points of view, the Gulf is a deeply meaningful region that has contributed fundamentally to the formation of early globalization, as it does to contemporary developments. Both overland and seaborne trade flourished with the emergence of interlinked world empires, T'ang China (618–907), the Islamic Ummayad/Abbasid empire in the Middle East (661–1258), and the Fatimids in North Africa (909–1171) (Hobson 2004: 35). K. N. Chaudhuri identifies a seafaring trade link between the commercial cities on the Red Sea and the Gulf in the seventh century that was "united by the common bend of Islam" (Chaudhuri 1985–15).

Several contributors to this volume take up this depth of the historical field and consider the region as a hub of trade and commerce during early phases of globalization—in short, oriental globalization. Roger Ballard describes how for centuries the Gulf provided an artery between the fertile lands of Mesopotamia and the open spaces of the Indian Ocean. And during British colonial times, “from 1904 onwards British India Steam Navigation Companies vessels steaming back and forth between Bombay and Basra also began to call in at Dubai.” Against this wider backdrop, Aqil Kazim discusses the rise of Dubai as a trading hub from the turn of the nineteenth century (a sequel to his earlier work, Kazim 2000). Nederveen Pieterse interprets contemporary developments in the context of a comeback and resumption of oriental globalization.

Another relevant framework is twenty-first-century globalization and the “new geography of trade” in which East-South, South-South trade links increasingly matter (Nederveen Pieterse 2008). Part of this is the rise of emerging societies from East Asia, China and India, to Turkey (Nederveen Pieterse and Rehbein 2009). In this context, the growing economic and social links between Asia and the Middle East again refocus on the Gulf—not merely as supplier of fossil fuels and as a strategic naval route, but also as the site of trading hubs and links in chains of economic and financial cooperation. Countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council, the United Arab Emirates, and Dubai perform many roles, including transport, communication, construction, finance, insurance, tourism, and health care, and as markets for East Asian manufactures.

The earlier interest in global cities reflected a hierarchy in which metropolitan centers such as New York, London, and Tokyo dominate the global landscape. In the twenty-first century, this hierarchy is gradually coming loose at the seams and links up with multiple centers in emerging societies, as the infrastructure of a multipolar world. The focus on global cities has also increasingly made place for interest in nodal cities, or cities and ports that fulfill nodal functions in global value chains, as entrepots, places of transshipment, and as centers of logistical and support services. In some respects, this interest resumes the classical tradition of historical research on trade routes by Pirenne and Braudel (recaptured by Frank 1996).

This sheds light on the crucial importance of the Gulf in general, and of Dubai in particular, and on the wider geo-economics of which they are a part (Woertz 2007). This takes us well past the facades of iconic Dubai, past Dubai as extravagant flagship of hypercapitalism—another popular and overplayed cliche—and instead refers to Dubai as an infrastructure hub and a center of services, a nodal city that serves rapidly growing economies and societies from East Asia to Central Asia, from the Middle East to Africa (Nederveen Pieterse, this volume).

In reflecting on this nodal role, a salient theme is the new Silk Road (Simpfendorfer 2009). In the old days, caravans went east and merchant ships carried silks, tea, and porcelain from China to ports in the Middle East and the West; now huge oil tankers carry fossil fuels to China, fuelling its economic engine. China's oil imports are projected to grow fourfold between 2003 and 2030, and much of the increased demand will be met by oil from the Gulf region (International Energy Outlook 2006: 25). The significance of the new Silk Road extends far beyond this for as a strategic nexus between emerging Asia and the Gulf, it connects the world's two major types of surplus economies—the factory economies of East and Southeast Asia and the energy exporters and trading cities of the Gulf.

Christopher Davidson's study of the political economy of Abu Dhabi in the UAE (this volume), a sequel to his work on Dubai (Davidson 2008), discusses its rapid economic diversification beyond hydrocarbons and the significance of its innovation policies, opening up new high tech economic sectors in heavy industry, renewable energy, and upmarket cultural tourism. Turning to iconic Dubai, among the services that it provides are tourism and retail. George Ritzer (this volume) reflects on the career of shopping malls and citadels of consumption such as the Dubai Mall, touted as one of the world's largest shopping centers, and asks whether they are going the way of the dinosaurs.

As a major hub of services and as part of a major construction boom following the high oil prices, especially during the period 2003 to 2008, the Gulf societies have also been importers of migrant labor on a massive scale,

from the Middle East, Asia, and Western countries. Some wonder whether the future of the region and of the UAE in particular, is threatened by the presence of such a large foreign population. As an Emirati interlocutor commented, “It is not only the Emirati identity that is at stake, it is the state that may be under threat.” An Emirati political scientist was quoted as saying that Emirati society should sacrifice high rates of economic growth to a slower and more sustainable rate so as to reduce dependence on foreign labor (Al Qassemi 2010). Such sentiments are not shared by the state, yet as unemployment among Emiratis increases questions such as these might be raised more frequently. In this volume, Habib Khondker examines the social dimensions of migrant labor in the UAE and the frictions these engender.

With this massive migrant population, differentiated by national origin and their position in the labor market, also comes cultural and class stratification among migrants. Katie Walsh analyzes cultural frictions among categories of migrants such as British migrants working in the financial sector and South Asian service and construction workers, who are drawn from different places by the same magnet. The Gulf, then, can also be understood as a vortex in which wider intercultural hierarchies are refracted and reworked.

A wider concern that inspires this volume is the role of the Middle East in contemporary globalization. While in different ways several of the angles mentioned above involve a decolonization of imagination, the contemporary Middle East is, arguably, also a zone of the recolonization of imagination. The theme of the “clash of civilizations” in the 1990s, the discourse of fundamentalism, the ideas of Bernard Lewis and others, and the attacks of 9/11, have given rise to a new ferocious Orientalism and fed into the agenda of American neoconservatives. This has targeted the Middle East as the main testing ground of the Project of the New American Century, the “freedom agenda” of the G. W. Bush administration, and three new wars—the war in Afghanistan, the war in Iraq, and the war on terror. Along with Israel’s occupation of Palestinian territories and the recent war in Gaza, this makes the Middle East the world’s central zone of war and conflict. Lena Jayyusi zeroes in on the Middle East as a theater of stereotypes, a site of recurrent conflict and the source of deeply tragic images that are broadcast globally, such as the devastation of Beirut and southern Lebanon, Israeli tanks rolling over homes in Jenin, the emergence of new walls of separation, the “Shock and Awe” of the Iraq war, Abu Ghraib, the war in Afghanistan, and American

drones operating from Yemen to Pakistan's border regions. Iran is the latest target in this ongoing sequence. This Middle East is the theater of discourses and representations of contemporary "othering" and of violence on a chronic and massive scale. One contribution argues that while contemporary globalization shows many trends of emergence, emancipation, and democratization, the Middle East so far remains an outlier, a zone of political stagnation, and in some respects, the Gulf is an outlier in the Middle East (Nederveen Pieterse, this volume).

Dale Eickelman's perspective on "mainstreaming Islam" strikes a different note. It breaks with the "fundamentalism" complex, pointing instead to the many contemporary strands of reform Islam and to the voices calling for critical thinking across the Islamic world, strands that fall outside the cliche narratives and hence do not figure in the popular media representations of the region and of Islam.

The IMF's growth forecasts for 2010 anticipate worldwide GDP growth of 4.2 percent, growth in emerging and developing economies by 6.3 percent, with developing Asian economies in the lead with 8.7 percent growth. In the Gulf, Qatar's GDP growth is forecast to reach 18.5 percent and the Gulf's largest economy, Saudi Arabia, is predicted to grow by 3.7 percent (IMF 2010). The projected growth of the UAE by a modest 1.3 percent signals a recovery from the economic crisis that saw a shrinking of its economy by -0.7 percent in 2009, after a growth of 5.1 percent in 2008.

When the subprime mortgage crisis hit banks in the United States and Europe in 2007 and 2008, sovereign wealth funds from surplus economies stepped into the breach, from oil-exporting countries, with the Abu Dhabi Investment Authority (the world's largest sovereign wealth fund) in the lead, followed by sovereign wealth funds from Norway, Qatar, and others, and from Asia's factory economies, in particular China and Singapore. The double irony was that the ever-hyped "free market" had to be rescued by state capital and that economies that had been dismissed as "crony capitalism" now came to rescue Wall Street's crony capitalism.

In the wake of the economic downturn in the Gulf region, mega projects were scaled back, the eco-city Masdar, the jewel in the crown of Abu Dhabi, was downsized from an ambitious, cutting-edge, zero-carbon-emission project to a less ambitious undertaking. In Dubai in 2009, according to some estimates, more than $300 billion worth of development projects were either cancelled or delayed (Political Risk Service 2009: 11). Dubai's real estate sector continues to suffer and foreclosures are expected to rise (Fattah 2010). The impact of economic crisis was cushioned by the intervention of the state. In this regard, developments in the Gulf parallel the worldwide trend of greater public sector involvement, including bailouts and increasing government regulation. On balance, if iconic Dubai has lost some of its shine, nodal Dubai has not, nor has the rest of the Gulf region.

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[1] On the annual Global Studies conferences, see [[http://www.GlobalStudiesConference.com] [www.GlobalStudiesConference.com]].

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** Views from Dubai: Oriental Globalization Revisited

Jan Nederveen Pieterse

This article situates developments in the United Arab Emirates, and Dubai in particular, in relation to globalization. It argues that the Middle East is an outlier in contemporary globalization, the Gulf is an outlier in the Middle East, and Dubai is an outlier in the Gulf. It adopts a historical perspective on globalization in which the Gulf and the Strait of Hormuz were central to "primary globalization" from 800 CE. Their trade links with Asia and Africa were the backbone of original oriental globalization, and the Silk Routes extended these links. Economic cooperation among a "string of pearls," from East Asia to the Gulf and the Middle East, and the gradual emergence of a "Chime" (China, India, Middle East) economic field signal a twenty-first-century comeback of oriental globalization. Sovereign wealth funds from these areas play a growing role in international finance and combine the assets of the world's two major surplus economies, East Asia's factory economies and the oil-exporting and trading economies of the Middle East.

Between 2000 and 2009, Dubai's annual economic growth was 18 percent, and from 2006 to 2008, property prices increased 80 percent.[2] At the time, Dubai ranked as the world's seventh most expensive office market, more expensive than Paris. Dubai's Palm Jumeirah real estate project was described as "the eighth wonder of the world."[3] In 2006, the Trump International Hotel & Tower Dubai was advertised as "the new DNA of extraordinary style and personalized living," which offers "the thrill of owning the future."[4]

Then the future came and with it came recession and highly critical reporting about Dubai. The tone of international reporting changed from euphoria to worry. Are the Gulf cities such as Dubai "fantasy cities for a future that might not come"?[5] Does the emirate of Dubai, "probably the brashest creature of globalization," suffer from "huge ambitions but hazy prospects," a "bloated property market, banks overlending," and "high anxiety as price surge goes

into reverse”? “Can the emirate still defy gravity?”[6] By 2009, the “oil price fall drove down growth” and the “threat of recession hung over [the] Gulf.”[7]

With the downturn comes anxiety among Dubai’s expatriates and harsh talk of Dubai as “con-city,” “Creditopolis,” and so forth.[8] Christopher Davidson’s book Dubai: The Vulnerability of Success lists economic liberalization without political reform, smuggling, arms trade, money laundering, and prostitution as part of the dark side of “glitzy Dubai.”[9] When, in November 2009, Dubai World, the emirate’s flagship holding company and owner of Nakheel, the lynchpin of Dubai’s property construction market, defaulted and sought restructuring of a $22bn debt, the asset bubble burst. Suddenly, Dubai looked like Miami on the Gulf, another crash victim with empty condominiums and office space to spare (with a 41 percent vacancy rate in new buildings at end 2009).

Dubai’s real estate boom followed the attacks of 9/11 2001 and the downturn in relations with the United States, which left “Arab investors worried about possible seizure of assets under the US Patriot Act.”[10] Looking for alternative investment venues, they turned to the Gulf as a prime option. The real estate boom is also an offshoot of high oil prices, peaking between 2003 and 2008, with the emirate serving as a speculative “sink for global excess profits ... awash with cheap bank credit.”[11] In □ world in which 345 billionaires own as much as half the world population, billionaires, too, need places to go. Mike Davis describes Dubai as “Milton Friedman’s beach club,” powered by the labor of near-slaves.[12] A paradise of personal security and financial secrecy, a “vast gated community, the ultimate Green Zone” ... “Dubai has achieved what American reactionaries can only dream of—an oasis of free enterprise without income taxes, trade unions, or opposition parties (there are no elections).”[13]

World class in Dubai often means “the largest”—the world’s tallest tower, the largest mall, the biggest man-made island, the biggest underground car park, the biggest indoor ski slope—along with fantasy kitsch and “visual and environment excess.” “Architectural gigantism,” according to a developer, is “part of building the brand.”[14] Part of the Dubai brand is making hyper-capitalism iconic and competing in the race for international brand

recognition through signature architecture. As a new kind of global city, Dubai has multiple identities, such as the “Bangkok of the Middle East,” a mob hideout refashioned as an icon of global capitalism, and the “charity capital” of the Middle East with a “Humanitarian City” for NGOs.[15]

In these various assessments, we can distinguish several lines of thought. A salient theme is recession talk: are the Dubai and Gulf projects crisis-proof? Between 2006 and 2008, Dubai property prices increased by 80 percent; in the first quarter of 2009, prices fell by 41 percent; and by end 2009, they had fallen 50 percent.[16] Hence, if one had invested before 2006 (which is true for most Emiratis), one may still be ahead by a considerable margin, so recession is relative.

A more fundamental theme is the critique of neoliberal globalization. Here a key concern is the relationship between economic growth and social and political rights, including migrant labor conditions and rights: “Those who built the city are hidden in prison-like camps, with no shot at enjoying the fruits of their labour.”[17] This evokes parallels with Singapore and its ethnic enclaves and apartheid for low-skill migrant workers. In Pakistan, the saying goes, “The Emirates in UAE stands for English-Managed, Indian-Run, Arabs Taking Enormous.Salaries.”[18] Pakistani media criticize the labor conditions of migrant workers in the Gulf. “A long standing rule holds that outdoor labour must cease if the temperature exceeds 50°C. Funnily enough, even on the most searing summer days, the temperature officially never rises beyond 49.9°C ... Accommodation invariably turns out to be a small room, shared with at least half a dozen others, in a squalid concrete block at a labour camp located far away from the glistening shopping malls.”[19] Under feudal regimes, reports in Pakistan note, no one has many rights, including UAE nationals.

A third line of criticism is sustainability, both economic and ecological. “Dubai is a monument to big-must-be-beautiful” and it “may nurse the world’s biggest per-capita debt.” “Nothing can bail out a tower if there is nobody to live in it... Dunes wait to devour Dubai’s ego ... Dubai is an anachronism, a throwback to the anything-goes boom years of the 1990s.”[20]

A related theme is Dubai as shopping center. Dubai prides itself on its appellation of the “Shopping Capital of the Middle East,” with more than 20 large, American-style, multi-story shopping malls with the latest technological innovations and much elegance.[21] The Gulf cities “rank among the top in per capita retail mall space” and Dubai ranks third after the United States and Singapore. “Dubai ranks third in the ratio of showroom space per person in the world.”[22] The Dubai Mall, a mega-mall of 1,200 shops, opened in 2008 and claims to be the world’s most high-tech shopping mall, featuring attractions such as an aquarium (one of the largest in the world), and an ice rink. With tourist spending down and international investors scaling back, the question is whether this prefigures the “fall of the mall.”[23]

These considerations are all valid and revealing to some extent, yet they do not reveal enough and are not sufficient for understanding the overall nature of the Gulf and UAE projects. I will discuss a different assessment with these keynotes: the overall development of the Gulf, Dubai as an outlier in the Gulf, and the wider setting of oriental globalization, old and new. It is appropriate, first, to situate the United Arab Emirates and Dubai in the region and in relation to globalization.

*** Globalization, the Middle East, the Gulf, and Dubai

A brief characterization is that the Middle East is an outlier in contemporary globalization, the Gulf is an outlier in the Middle East, and Dubai is an outlier in the Gulf. While the twenty-first-century world landscape is changing rapidly with the rise of emerging societies,[24] the Middle East is, in many respects, an outlier. Everything changes, but the Middle East barely does. While in most developing and emerging countries there has been marked progress in social development, particularly during the commodities boom of 2003–08, the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) show uptick in economic growth but dramatically lag behind in human development, as the Arab Human Development Reports indicate. While in most developing countries there is a trend towards democratization, most MENA countries continue to be autocracies. While in most developing countries American influence has

been shrinking, the Middle East remains handcuffed to the United States. The general reasons why the United States continues its hold on the region are familiar: a major energy-exporting region in a geopolitically strategic location, American influence in the region since the Suez crisis, the Carter Doctrine declaring that the Gulf is vital to American national security, the relationship with Israel, and American operations in Central and West Asia.

American influence in the region is not only dominant, but is also widely perceived as ineffectual. “All the US approaches in the region—relying on Iran and Saudi Arabia as part of the twin-pillar policy in the 1970s; propping up Iraq to counter Iran as part of the balance of power policy in the 1980s; and [the] invasion of Iraq in 2003—have failed to guarantee the desired level of security.”[25] The neoconservative project of regime change and “bringing democracy to the Middle East” was dead on arrival. In Ben Barber’s words, “Beware the Americans, especially when they come talking democracy.”[26] Hence in the region, the United States is viewed as “a spent force—not militarily or economically, but politically.” “What remains is a facade of a relationship.”[27] A change of administration in the United States makes no significant difference. A short description of the situation is “Gaza.” An Egyptian commentator wrote of President Obama’s speech in Cairo: “We welcomed him with almost total enthusiasm until he underwent his first real test: Gaza … We were beginning to recognize how far the distance is between the great American values that Mr. Obama embodies and what can actually be accomplished in a country where support for Israel seems to transcend human rights and international law.”[28] Thus, the Middle East is, to an unusual extent, hostage to American politics. This is not just a matter of domestic American electoral politics but is also, at a deeper level, what Anatol Lieven has called the “intertwining of American and Israeli nationalisms.”[29] In sum, the Middle East is an outlier in twenty-first-century globalization, countercyclical to general trends of emergence and even effervescence in many developing countries.

Meanwhile, the Gulf has been an outlier in the Middle East for some time. The Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC)—comprising Kuwait, Qatar, Bahrain, the UAE, Saudi Arabia, and Oman—is, first, of course, the world’s major oilexporting region. “The GCC countries command about 40 percent of worldwide oil reserves and 23 percent of worldwide gas reserves.”[30] In addition, the Gulf has emerged increasingly as a center of accumulation

beyond hydrocarbons. For decades, oil revenues left the region for Swiss banks, American arms, luxury consumption, and investments in the West. The emergence of the Gulf region as an accumulation center refers to a new impetus in the Middle East, where development policies have long been wanting.[31] The GCC has broken with the earlier pattern of rentier economies that squandered oil wealth on luxury consumption, prestige projects, and American treasuries, and instead has emerged as the Middle East's major accumulation zone.

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Until the 1980s their position in the international division of labor was clear: oil was exported and manufactured goods were imported, mainly from Europe and the US. Now the situation has changed. Although the importance of oil and gas revenues is still paramount, the GCC countries command an increasingly diversified economic structure^] with new sectors emerging in the fields of petrochemicals, heavy industries, utilities, services and tourism. In petrochemicals, the GCC countries already have a world market share of 10 percent, and in other areas like aluminium and fertilizer they will quickly approach this mark over the next years.[32]

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Politically, the GCC matches the MENA pattern of autocratic rule and statecentered economies and societies. Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar, the UAE, Saudi Arabia, and Oman all offer variants of royal family rule, as do Jordan and Morocco. The constitutions in the region are all undergoing gradual political reform.[33] The GCC matches the MENA pattern of a large state role in the economy but, unlike most MENA states, the GCC states exhibit features of developmental states, actively seeking diversification beyond hydrocarbons and investing in infrastructure, industry, high-tech innovation, human development, and higher education, along with an emerging private sector. Eckart Woertz writes:

<quote>

The role of the state in national development is pronounced: the largest 10–20 companies in each GCC country are owned by the state, either in full or via majority stakes (all national oil, utilities and telecom companies, airlines, SABIC, Borouge, Dubai Holding, Dubai Aluminium, major banks like Emirates Bank, etc.). In addition, the state plays a crucial role in infrastructure investments and reforming the education sector in order to supply better-skilled workers to the labor market and thus mitigate the burgeoning problem of youth unemployment'. Nevertheless, the private sector has developed considerably. It has ventured into productive industries beyond the traditional rent-based contracting from the state and has become politically more assertive.[34]

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The GCC, like many MENA countries, follows American hegemony,[35] but increasingly balances this by "looking East." Thus, Saudi Arabia is trying to balance its international position by courting China and India. Analysts argue that this balancing act is not novel in Saudi foreign policy but is part of a pattern of "managed multi-dependence," which has been established for over a century.[36] Janardhan notes, "The "Look East" policy is not a replacement for its [Saudi Arabia's] traditional ties with the United States, but could, however, be an effort to restrict Washington's influence. This means that GCC-US ties are no longer exclusive."[37] A new leitmotif in the GCC is that "a lasting Gulf security system can only function if it is based on a regional initiative."[38] GCC cooperation has proved to be more successful and robust than other attempts at cross-border cooperation in a region fractured by splits.

The World Bank divides the MENA region into the resource-rich/labor-importing countries of the Gulf and the mainly resource-poor/labor-abundant countries of the Mediterranean.[39] It is not large, population-rich countries, such as Egypt, but oil-rich, politically stable states with small populations that have become accumulation centers. This situation is reminiscent of the old pattern of the caravan trade and the silk routes along which cities such as Basra, Baghdad, Mecca, Damascus, and Aleppo were hubs. It resembles the city states of medieval Italy's Levant trade, such as Venice, Genoa, Florence, Pisa, and Livorno. It also parallels the development of the Asian tiger economies in the late twentieth century. The entrepot economies of the

Gulf have much in common with the Asian city states of Hong Kong and Singapore: authoritarian rule, open economies favorable to foreign direct investment, migrant labor, and a division of labor based on ethnic hierarchy. It calls to mind that East Asian development has been accompanied by authoritarian policies. Hong Kong and Singapore are city- states without a rural hinterland, like the Gulf societies. The main difference between the trading cities of the silk routes and the Asian city states is that the Gulf cities are petro-states, with the exception of Dubai as primarily a trading city.

The rapid developments in the Gulf date largely from the spike in oil prices in the 1970s and 1980s. The speed of development has been striking: “Sheik Zayed of Abu Dhabi (1918–2004) was the architect for creating the UAE federation in 1971, when only two persons had university degrees in the new country.”[40] These developments also represent a strategic intervention in the geo-economics of oil: “The GCC was founded in 1981 to counterbalance superpower manipulation of oil policies in the fairly lightly populated oil states there, and to serve as a traditional council for discussing economic and political issues of mutual interest.”[41]The developments have accelerated over time with the rise of the Asian economies, unstable relations with the United States in the wake of the 9/11 attacks, and the 2003–08 oil price hike.

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9/11, and the attendant erosion of the US-Saudi “special relationship”, gave an extra stimulus to Riyadh’s “looking East” tendency. Quite a few Saudi merchants feared, rightly or wrongly, that their assets in US dollars in American institutions were no longer safe. Hence it made sense to them to find alternative investment opportunities, for example[,] by investing more at home. Like many other investors, they also increasingly put their money in Eastern markets. The result of all this is growing economic ties between the world’s largest manufacturer and the world’s largest supplier of energy, where economic realities are clearly trumping the political relationship. Nowadays, Saudi Arabia accounts for about 17 percent of China’s imported oil, while total trade grew by almost 60 percent in 2005 to $14 billion. China has become Saudi Arabia’s fourth largest importer and fifth largest exporter, and the Kingdom is China’s tenth largest importer and its second biggest oil supplier.[42]

</quote>

If the Middle East, in comparison to other regions, is relatively less integrated into globalization, other than through Washington institutions and regimes (and for the Maghreb Union in North Africa, cooperation with the EU), the Gulf is profoundly integrated into contemporary globalization. Whereas in most developing countries, openness in media and in forums of democratic expression has been growing, this has not been the case in the Middle East. But this pattern has been broken by the Al Jazeera news channel in Doha and by Al Arabiya in Dubai. The Gulf also serves as a major transnational communication hub, home to fiber-optic cables linking Europe and Asia and extensive satellite TV links with South Asia. Attempts are being made to create a large borderless communication market extending from Dubai to Taipei. “Dubai’s information infrastructure ranks first in the Arab world and eighteenth in the world, as gauged by [the] numbers of personal computers and mobile telephones.”[43]

Within the GCC, there is a division between the high-income/labor- poor emirates in the Gulf region, on the one hand, and the middle-income/ labor-rich countries of Saudi Arabia and Oman, on the other. Nevertheless, all face the main common problems of the GCC countries: water, food, and labor. “Water is scarce and the dependence on potable water from energyintensive desalination hovers between 40–43 percent (Oman, Saudi Arabia) and 85–99 percent in the rest of the GCC countries.”[44] The problem of water is directly related to that of food security. As Eckart Woertz notes, the FAO expects average import dependence in the Arabian Peninsula to reach nearly 60 percent by 2010. “The Gulf’s dependence on food imports and its corresponding geo-economic vulnerability is somehow comparable to the dependence of industrialized states on oil imports. Food accounts for 15 percent of total imports in Saudi Arabia, for example, with the main trading partners being the EU, Australia, Ukraine, Syria, Brazil, India and the US.”[45]

The third main common problem is labor scarcity. In Eckart Woertz’s words: “There is a huge dependence on foreign labor in the GCC, and even in population-rich Saudi Arabia it constitutes about 65 percent of the workforce. On the other hand, there is a growing domestic unemployment problemf,] especially in Saudi Arabia, Bahrain and Oman, as employment creation in

capital intensive industries is limited and as the local population either lacks the skills for higher qualified jobs or finds the salaries and working conditions of the blue collar expatriate workforce unacceptable."[46]

<quote>

One important challenge in the service sector will be the improvement of education, as higher value added services like finance, health care, engineering and research will need more qualified human resources than in the currently prevailing personal services and retail sectors. The GCC economies are thriving on huge inputs of cheap Asian labor, and the incentives as well as the capacities to venture into technologically advanced sectors is limited. This naturally poses a dilemma, as appealing jobs for nationals could be created in these sectors, provided there is an improvement of their skill level. At the same time the corresponding migration patterns can possibly lead to frictions with aspiring migrants who do not have a chance to become long term stakeholders.[47]

</quote>

Most Gulf nationals are employed in the public sector, while 99 percent of employees in the private sector are expatriates. "The locals hold the top positions. Indians, by far the largest and deepest rooted expatriate group, span labouring class to white-collar office workers; the British have been the traditional managerial class; the Lebanese the bankers and advertising executives; and Filipinos the domestic workers and shop assistants."[48]

Indians from the northern part of the country run many institutions. Gujaratis (from western India) are active in trade and enterprise; Malayalis from Kerala (in southern India) and Pakistanis work in construction and in manual labor and services; Filipinos are prominent in the hotel and retail trades; and Chinese entrepreneurs have a significant presence as well. This massive use of migrant labor almost rules out the possibility of broadbased development and hence fundamentally limits the Gulf model. It imposes limitations on economic diversification in the GCC countries, with its emphasis on capital- and energy-intensive sectors.[49] The employment indigenization quotas adopted by Gulf countries (such as 4 percent in the banking sector, 5 percent in the insurance sector, and 2 percent for large trading companies in the

UAE) strain the education system. The dependence on migrant labor induces cultural and social insecurity. In the UAE, where 80 percent of the population is foreign, 2008 was declared the year of national identity, with forums dedicated to the subject. At one of these, the chairman of the National Human Resources Development and Employment Authority said: “Today, an Emirati student is being taught Islamic studies in English by a Pakistani. This is the state of our nation.”[50] In 2002, Dubai began to allow foreigners to own real estate, and Abu Dhabi allows ninety-nine-year leases in certain areas. The questioning of national identity in Gulf societies reflects the insecurities of nationals who are in the minority and who hold tenuous positions in the labor market. Yet, this views the “nation” in narrow terms that are derivative of Westphalian models that don’t apply here and that fail to acknowledge the regional identity of which the Gulf is a part.[51] There is friction between the economic cosmopolitanism of the Gulf societies, on the one hand, and their provincialism in terms of identity and rights for expatriates, on the other. The dire accounts of labor migration in the Gulf expose the dark side of the Gulf model.[52]

The Gulf cities share a pattern of “petro-urbanism.” They are “oil cities,” characterized by rapid development organized around car transport, with broad multi-lane roads that barely have sidewalks—with “disproportionally large space for wide roads and super highways, like those of southern California”—minimal public transport, suburbanization, and neglect of the old city as nationals have moved out of the old houses for modern villas on the outskirts.[53] Al Sayyad and Roy note that gated communities and exclusive areas also existed in the Middle Ages and coin the term “medieval modernity” to characterize some of the recent urban developments in India and the Middle East.[54] The Gulf cities have the highest per capita water consumption and the highest per capita waste production in the world, and as such are unsustainable formations. Abu Dhabi is going beyond this pattern, with major investments in ecological innovation, such as the zero-carbon-emission city of Masdar and ecotourism,[55] and high-tech industries, such as nuclear energy and semiconductors.

If we were to look at the Gulf as a “model” and as the centre of an alternative modernity in a multipolar world,[56] its limitations become glaring. Peak oil may be on the horizon. While the GCC has gone beyond hydrocarbons, its capital-intensive path of industrialization and its

dependence on migrant labor rule out the broad-based development that the Middle East is most in need of. There are two options for going beyond the current GCC model. One is to provide migrant workers with significantly greater rights and to redefine national identity to acknowledge a greater Arab-Asian symbiosis and a wider and more flexible regional identity. So far this is unlikely to happen, as it would erode elite privileges and the entitlements of nationals. The second option is for the votaries of petrodollar recycling to undertake major investments in MENA, which has been ongoing. In the current oil cycle, “GCC countries have moved beyond mere portfolio investments to undertake strategic foreign investments,” also in MENA. While these “aim to benefit the diversification of their domestic economies,”[57] their impact in terms of broad-based development in the wider region remains to be seen.

*** Unpacking Dubai

Yasser Elsheshtawi speaks of “global Dubai” and Dubaization as a leitmotif in globalization.[58] Dubai has become iconic as an expression of spectacular hypercapitalism, which leaves Las Vegas far behind and, since 2008, as a rollercoaster asset bubble economy. As such, it has become proverbial, with “Dubai effects” being registered in, for instance, China’s property market (such as Tianjin and its seven-star hotel with an indoor ski slope under construction, Pudong in Shanghai, and Hainan Island with its tripling property prices).[59]

Yet both themes are overworked: Dubai’s facade is iconic, but iconic Dubai is not Dubai’s strength. Dubai’s real estate, tourism, and malls are vulnerable, and several investments may not survive the 2007–09 crisis. Yet, conspicuous as they are, they are not Dubai’s main strengths. They are add-ons and diversifications that Dubai can do without, and yet retain its main strengths. If the GCC is an outlier in the Middle East, Dubai is an outlier in the GCC. The GCC countries, except Oman and Bahrain, are oil-based economies whereas Dubai’s economy is based on trade and services. Bahrain derives only 14 percent of its GDP from oil, and Dubai 6 percent. Dubai’s main strength lies in its wide investments in infrastructure, particularly in advanced container ports, roads, and communication links and networks, and in attracting the human capital to make all this work. The Jebel Ali port,

the world’s largest man-made port, was completed in 1976 with financing from the newly formed UAE (established in 1971). Add to this business parks and free zones, such as the Jebel Ali Free Zone.[60] This has established Dubai as an entrepot economy and commercial hub that is nestled amid economies whose growth paths extend far beyond the 2008 crisis. It is the “commercial and tourist hub of a region that encompasses [the] growing markets of South Asia, emerging Africa, oil-rich Russia and the Gulf states, Iran, Central Asia and [the] Caucasus, Europe and China.”[61]

Dubai World’s default in November 2009 came as a shock but not as a surprise. Dubai real estate had long been regarded as a bubble waiting to pop.[62] “The oil money flooding the region stimulated a mighty property boom. Everything went up fast and chaotically: cranes, buildings, prices.”[63] A breakdown of Dubai World’s debt ($24.1bn at end 2009) shows that it is largely due to the developer Nakheel, associated with Palm Jebel Ali, Palm Jumeirah, Jumeirah Park, and other iconic construction projects, while the Ports and Free Zone World are on a sound footing and carry minor debt.[64] Nevertheless, the reverberations of Dubai World’s default and debt restructuring (of $26bn) extend far and wide. They signal defaults moving from mortgage holders and banks to sovereign debt and prompt the rising cost of insuring against sovereign default (along the lines of Iceland, Greece, and possibly Ireland, Hungary, Bulgaria, and Egypt). The default has dented Dubai’s financial reputation and exposed its weak institutions, weak legal system, lack of transparency, and communication problems, which have contributed to a “public image disaster.”[65] Gulf News, the UAE’s major English- language newspaper, told its journalists to avoid using the words “bailout,” “default,” and “debt crisis” when writing about Dubai’s debt crisis and instead to use phrases such as “financial consolidation” and “fiscal support.”[66] The general expectations are that Dubai will borrow $10bn from Abu Dhabi and come back as a less exuberant, but more livable place.[67] Yet Dubai is the exception that confirms the overall role of emerging markets as safe havens following the 2008 crisis. Moreover, Dubai’s crisis is but a small blip among much larger asset bubbles, including the American property market. Indeed, various post-crisis scripts shed light on Dubai’s actual strengths.

<quote>

Its fundamentals as a regional hub of shipping, services, people, trade and capital have not changed. “Disneyland Dubai has crashed,” as one Dubaibased banker put it, referring to headline-grabbing property projects, “but the core business model of Dubai remains sound.” ... To understand why Dubai will survive, it is important to understand its commercial geography. It is not solely an Arab state—demographically or commercially... There is no city within striking distance of challenging Dubai as a hub in a region that extends beyond the Arab world to 1.5bn people.[68]

</quote>

This echoes the narrative of the “Central World” that Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Dubai’s ruler, often reiterates in interviews: “People think we’re just building Dubai. But no, we’re accommodating 1.5bn people in the central world, here, between east and west.”[69] Dubai is the region’s main trading hub, with ports and airports unmatched in the Gulf, and ranks among the ten largest container terminal port cities in the world. No doubt, the emirate needs stronger institutions, transparency, and better legal rights for expatriates, but its bedrock strength remains trade infrastructure, where investments are ongoing, crisis or no crisis. Dubai World’s cargo throughput has increased throughout the financial crisis. The emirate is “increasing the capacity of the Jebel Ali Port from the current 14m-15m TEUs [or twenty-foot equivalent unit containers]. DP World plans to add a further six terminals by 2030, boosting capacity to more than 50mn TEUs, which would make it the world’s biggest port.”[70] Also under construction is an international airport (with an annual capacity of up to 150m passengers and 12m tons of cargo when completed). Thus, “the value of Dubai’s exports and re-exports amounted to more than half the size of the statelet’s gross domestic product... Though tourism and real estate receive the most attention in Dubai, trade is thus one of the most important drivers of economic growth in the city-state.”[71]

The financial future of the Gulf states is not in question either. Rather, “Gulf countries plan at least $2,000bn of spending on infrastructure projects in the coming years in order to diversify their economies away from oil.”[72] Even with regard to tourism, “under current plans, Gulf countries are constructing 306 new hotels, with 108,600 rooms, worth in excess of $140 billion.”[73]

Dubai is part of a string of nodal cities—Shanghai, Hong Kong, Singapore, Mumbai—which are all financial centers and major ports, and which form a pearl necklace with increasing cooperation among each other. Kobe in Japan, Busan in South Korea, the Pearl River delta in China, and the Gulf cities are part of this chain. Singapore in particular is Dubai's lodestar. "Dubai has already become a world-class service and distribution center; its role in West Asia is comparable to Singapore in South East Asia. Other centers are following, with Bahrain as the region's financial center, Doha as the media center, and Riyadh as the institutional and diplomatic center."[74] The Gulf entrepot economies serve as links between the Middle East, Asia, Africa, and Europe. A comparison of Gulf trade and investment over the last 25 years shows that Asia has gained at the expense of the United States and the European Union.[75]

<quote>

A dramatic rise in the flows of goods, capital and people between the oilrich Gulf and the fast-developing nations of Asia began around the dawn of the new century that may go on to reshape the world economy ... Trade between the Gulf Cooperation Council six members and East Asia quadrupled between 1995 and 2005 ... Bilateral trade between China and Saudi Arabia increased 30 percent between 2005 and 2006 alone ... Total crossborder capital flows between the Council and the rest of Asia may climb from annual $15b today to $300b by 2020.[76]

</quote>

While oil is central to these relations, interregional investments in infrastructure, construction, and telecoms and financial links play a growing role. Emaar Properties, owned by the ruling family and Dubai's leading developer after Nakheel, is active in construction from Morocco to China, and builds hotels in India and Pakistan.[77] A common heading for this East-East cooperation is the "new Silk Road." It reflects, of course, the dynamism of contemporary Asia and the momentum of China, India, and Southeast Asia. A growing share of China's IPOs (Initial Public Offerings) is routed via GCC financial centers and no longer via Wall Street or London City. Following the Asian crisis of 1997–8, Asian countries have begun to chart a more prudent course in finance and investment, and a course more independent from Anglo-American finance, overexposure to which was a major factor in the

Asian crisis. Thus, Asia looks to the Middle East for financial services while Gulf investors and enterprises “go global by going east, not west.” This is a major U-turn in relation to the recent past, but not if we consider patterns of the older past.

*** Oriental Globalization and “the New Silk Road”

Sheikh Dr. Sultan bin Mohammed Al Qassimi, the ruler of Sharjah, opens his foreword to a volume titled Globalization and the Gulf with this observation: “For centuries, the Arabian Gulf region has been a crossroads where seafaring people and Bedouins alike traveled great distances transacting business. Today the descendants of these merchants and traders oversee ships and aircraft transporting goods to and from all the major ports of the world.”[78] This suggests, first, that globalization, at least in the sense of long-distance cross-cultural trade, is by no means new to the region. Rather, the region has been a forerunner of this kind of trade. Second, the memory of past trading practices is alive and informs contemporary ways. In addition, in the region, contemporary trends are viewed not only as a continuation of the past but also as an improvement over past ways (from trading to “overseeing”). The volume to which Sheikh Al Qassimi’s piece is a foreword, however, consistently presents globalization as a recent phenomenon that originates in Europe and the West, and accordingly comes to the region from without.[79] There is an odd friction, then, between the Emirati ruler’s evocation of a history of long-distance commerce, on the one hand, and the volume’s Western or Western-educated editors and contributors whose perspective on globalization is thoroughly Eurocentric, on the other.

In their opening chapter, the editors note that “the Trucial coast… was the Middle East’s most disconnected area within the European-managed world system. The Trucial Coast was also the most tribal…” Yet, within two generations, the inhabitants of this region had turned “small desert towns and seaports into urbanized states. The now overwhelmingly ultramodern Gulf societies have grown exponentially to some 33 million persons in all. Based on the rapidity and designed development, all of which has been achieved since the advent of globalization during the 1970s, the Arabian Gulf provides a laboratory par excellence to assess and fine tune the theories of

globalization.”[80] The opening chapter’s theme, therefore, is the relationship between traditionalism and globalization. The source of wonder is that the states that were most disconnected from the European world were those that were able to advance most rapidly amid contemporary globalization. If globalization or, for that matter, modernity comes from Europe, this doesn’t make sense, and hence poses a sociological problem. What follow, then, are intricate accounts that attribute the rapidity of modernization in the Gulf essentially to the cohesive nature of the tribal kinship system; in other words, a dialectics of progress or advantages of backwardness type of argument. The volume editors and contributors overlook the fact that, although the region was disconnected from the European world, it was connected to the Asian world and to the Indian Ocean, and this provides a major clue to understanding the evolution of the Gulf.

Eurocentrism and world-system theory treat Europe as the wellspring of the “modern world-system,” so progress comes first to those regions that are adjacent to and directly exposed to European dynamics. The Eurocentric view has been corrected by many studies, such as Janet Abu-Lughod’s work on the importance of the Middle East economies prior to European hegemony, but still prevails in this volume. According to several scholars, globalization, in the sense of the formation of a world economy of some scope and density, began to develop much earlier, from 500 CE, centered in the Middle East. John Hobson uses the term Oriental globalization. If oriental globalization can be dated from 500 to 1800, the career of occidental globalization runs from 1800 to 2000.[81] We can better understand the depth and likely future of the relations between Asia and the Middle East in light of the old pattern of the silk routes. The Strait of Hormuz and the Arabian Gulf have figured in the annals of transnational trade longer and more consistently than any other part of the world. This is the backbone of original, primary globalization, as discussed by Andre Gunder Frank, Hobson, and others.[82] The dhows of Oman and the Gulf have plied the Indian Ocean shores since time immemorial. The Strait of Hormuz has been part of the maritime silk routes for centuries. All along this has been a “multicultural,” Arab, Persian, Indian, and African trade—with ships built with Indian teak, Gujarati traders from Surat, merchants from Persia, Baluchistan and Afghanistan, dhows voyaging to and from Oman, Hormuz, and Zanzibar as far as China and Korea. The trading ports—Muscat

on the Oman coast, and Hormuz, Bandar Abbas, and Lingan on the Gulf—thrived on intercultural traffic and long-distance trade.

Dubai's rise as a trading port goes back to 1877, when Persia, then at war with Russia, conquered Lingan and imposed a war tax of 30 percent on trade. Just then, the sheik of Dubai declared its port a free port so the Lingan traders, Emiratis, Persians, and Indians moved en masse to Dubai.[83] Free trade, then, is written into Dubai's script from the outset; free trade is its raison d'etre. This has nothing to do with neoliberalism or neoliberal globalization, as Mike Davis and others allege. Interculturalism is also part of the Gulf script. "Multiculturalism has defined the Gulf since time immemorial."[84] The Asianization of the Gulf in general, and of Dubai in particular, with a steep increase in the numbers of Asian immigrants following the construction, real estate, and retail booms after 2001, comes on top of an older presence of Asians in the Gulf. All along, the Gulf has been part of an Indian Ocean, Arab- Persian-Indian network.

There is a keen awareness in the region of historical depth. Thus, Aqil Kazim's time frame for analyzing the "transformation in the Arabian Gulf" is CE 600 to the present.[85] The Middle East-Asia routes are known as the caravan trade and the Asia-Middle East routes, which developed much later, as the silk routes. The Middle East-Asia trade routes are probably the oldest in the world and remained the backbone of world trade through the centuries. China, India, and Southeast Asia remained central to the world economy well into the nineteenth century. Yet, overtime, several developments decentered these routes—the rise of the Mongols and the sack of Baghdad in 1248, the sixteenth-century entry of Europeans in the Indian Ocean and subsequently in the Asian trade, and European colonialism and imperialism.[86]

In the course of the twentieth century, the Middle East gradually made an economic comeback because of fossil fuels, and East Asian countries made □ comeback as factory economies. The combination of these two economic zones is referred to as the "new Silk Road" (with oil as the new silk, in some accounts). The idea of a "new Silk Road" dates back further.[87] The comeback of Asia, the crucial role of fossil fuels in the world economy, and the end of the Cold War have combined to make these routes more

important than ever.[88] In the nineteenth century, Central Asia was the stake in the “great game” played by the rival British and Russian empires. Mackinder’s thesis of the “heartland” and the “pivot area” that has long guided American geopolitics again focuses on this area. In American geopolitics, Eurasia ranks as the world’s heartland, with a paraphrase of Mackinder: “he who controls Eurasia controls the world.”[89] In Zbigniew Brzezinski’s panorama of American geopolitical objectives, the most coveted stretch of real estate is Central Asia, also because its oil and gas reserves allegedly dwarf those of the Middle East. The “Central World” that Sheikh Mohammed, Dubai’s ruler, refers to as Dubai’s actual radius and field of operation is a maritime version of Eurasia and the heartland. Sheikh Mohammed’s “Central World” is not merely commerce and economics but geo-economics. It “comprises the Middle East, swathes of Africa and West Asia. Sheikh Mohammed sees Dubai as helping the Arab world revive some of its glories.”[90] Thus, it recaptures the classical role of the Middle East and the Islamic world as brokers between continents and civilizations.[91] Sheikh Mohammed’s “Central World” is the world of oriental globalization and reclaims the depth of this historical field as part of Dubai’s legacy and its future. The view from Dubai, then, is the panorama of oriental globalization revisited.

With the United States and Europe headed for slow growth, East-East and East-South cooperation will increase. When the financial crisis erupted, financial powerhouses in the West turned to sovereign wealth funds from the Gulf to Singapore and China to make up for their losses on American subprime mortgages and CDOs (Collateralized Debt Obligations).[92] However, after suffering significant losses on their early investments in American financial institutions, “sovereign wealth funds such as that of Abu Dhabi are investing less in the West.”[93] While the surplus economies have been asked to come to the rescue of Western banks and the IMF in G20 meetings, their voting quotas and roles in decision-making boards have been limited. They are being invited to raise their stakes in a hegemony that is founded on an unstable dollar, casino financial practices, and double standards in the Middle East. American Orientalism is widely on display in the region.[94] In the Gulf, there is a subtle counterbalance between cultural and political affinities with the United States on the one hand, and growing inclination towards Asia on the other, which crosscuts political and ideological lines. Asia holds greater economic but less cultural appeal. Oriental globalization is both old and new, and twenty-first-century oriental

globalization must strike a new balance with the large footprint of two hundred years of occidental globalization. Middle East funds are likely to focus more on home markets, MENA, and Asia. Asian sovereign wealth funds have experienced similar setbacks. The 2008 crisis reinforces the trend of East-East cooperation.[95] The combination of the factory economies of Asia and the energy exporters of the Middle East, the world's two major surplus economies, portends wider twenty-first- century changes.

[2] Nadir Hassan, "The worst of both worlds," Newsline, November 2008, 22–28 (p. 23).

[3] Akraim Belkaid, "Fantasy cities for a future that might not come," Le Monde Diplomatique, August 2008, 5.

[4] Financial Times, June 30, 2008, ad page.

[5] Akraim Belkaid, "Fantasycitiesforafuturethatmightnotcome," Le Monde D/p/omatfque, August 2008, 5.

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[8] Hari 2009.

[9] ^c Davidson 20081 Cf. K ane 2009.

[10] Faisal Islam, “Booming Middle East needs urgent economic makeover,” Observer, September 28, 2003, 4.

[11] Davis 2007, 59, 54.

[12] Davis 2007, 48–68.

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[14] Davis 2007, 52–3.

[15] Davis 2007, 63. Davidson 2008, 173.

[16] N. Hassan, “The worst of both worlds,” Newsline, November 2008, 22–28 (p. 23). “Dubai landlords,” Arabian Business, 10, 18, 2009, 16.

[17] Nadir Hassan, “Dubai Chalo,” Newsline, November 2008, 19–20 (p. 20). Mahir Ali, “The underside of paradise,” Newsline, November 2008, 47–8. See the Human Rights Watch report on migrant labor conditions in the UAE (2006).

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[20] S. Jenkins, “Dunes wait to devour Dubai’s ego,” Guardian Weekly, March 27, 2009, 21.

[21] Khalaf 2006, 256.

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[23] S. Billing, “The fall of the mall?” Arabian Business, 9, 45, 34–6.

[24] See, for example, Prestowitz 2005, van Agtmael 2007, and Nederveen Pieterse and Rehbein 2009.

[25] Janardhan 2007, 67.

[26] Barber 2005, 119.

[27] Janardhan 2007, 67.

[28] Alaa al Aswany, “Why the Muslim world can’t hear Obama,” New York Times, February 8, 2909, WK11.

[29] Cf. Nederveen Pieterse 2008, Mearsheimer and Walt 2006.

[30] Woertz 2007, 15.

[31] Cf. Messkoub 2008.

[32] Woertz 2007, 19.

[33] See Khalaf and Luciani, eds., 2006.

[34] Woertz 2007, 15.

[35] All GCC countries either host US military bases (Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar) or have close military relationships with the US (Saudi Arabia, UAE, Oman).” Woertz 2007,16.

[36] Aarts and van Rijsingen 2007, 31. Aarts and Nonneman 2006.

[37] Janardhan 2007, 61.

[38] Janardhan 2007, 67.

[39] Woertz 2007, 15.

[40] fox etai. 2006, 21.

[41] Fox, Mourtada-Sabbah, and al-Mutawa 2006, 40.

[42] Aarts and van Rijsingen 2007, 29–30.

[43] Fox, Mourtada-Sabbah, and al-Mutawa 2006, 50.

[44] Woertz 2007,17. These are brief glosses. For an extended discussion, see Woertz 2007.

[45] Woertz 2007 17.

[46] Woertz 2007, 16.

[47] Woertz 2007, 18.

[48] R. Khalaf, S. Kerr, and A. England, “Dubai stopped in its tracks,” Financial Times, December 2, 2009, 7.

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[53] Khalaf 2006, 259.

[54] Al Sayyad and Roy 2006.

[55] See [[http://www.masdar.ae][www.masdar.ae]].

[56] Cf. Nederveen Pieterse 2009.

[57] Sfakianakis and Woertz 2007. Cf. Setser and Ziemba 2007, UNCTAD 2009.

[58] Elsheshtawi 2010.

[59] Cf. G. Dyer, “The soap opera of China’s housing boom,” Financial Times, January 7, 2010, 9.

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[72] E. Mostaque, “Reasons why the Gulf states look solid in the long term,” Financial Times, December 3, 2009, 24.

[73] “Room for employment,” Gulf Business, June 2009, 13.

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[77] Barton and de Boer 2007.

[78] Al Qassimi 2006, x.

[79] For example, “Globalization is relatively recent,” Fox et al. 2006, 31.

[80] Fox et al. 2006, 8–9.

[81] See Hobson 2004, Nederveen Pieterse 2006.

[82] Frank 1998, Hoerder 2002, Hobson 2004, Nederveen Pieterse 2006, Simpfendorfer 2009, Starr 2000.

[83] See Kazim 2000; Ballard, this volume.

[84] Fox et al. 2006, 267.

[85] Kazim 2000.

[86] Cf. Nederveen Pieterse 2007 on Islam and cosmopolitanism.

[87] Abdel-Malek 1994.

[88] Thanks to the collapse of the USSR, whose closed border stood like a wall across the heart of Eurasia, to China’s decision to open trade across its western border, and to the gradual return of Afghanistan to the community of nations, continental trade spanning the entire Eurasian land mass is again becoming possible.” Starr 2000, 2.

[89] Brzezinski 1997, xiv. Cf. Flint and Taylor 2007, Flint 2006, Nederveen Pieterse 2004,156–8.

[90] S. Kerr, ‘“Bubble economy’ defies gravity,” Financial Times, July 24, 2007, special report.

[91] Nederveen Pieterse 2007.

[92] Sundeep Tucker, “Crisis results in West turning East,” Financial Times, January 24, 2008,3.

[93] For example, A. England, “Abu Dhabi: sovereign wealth funds less in West,” Financial Times, January 19, 2009. The Abu Dhabi Investment Authority, the world’s leading sovereign wealth fund (with assets estimated at $400bn), took a $7.5bn stake in Citigroup in November 2007 and then the shares plummeted. The Qatar Investment Authority had a good return on its £7bn investment in Barclays,

[94] Little 2008.

[95] Altman 2009. On the role of sovereign wealth funds, see Teslik 2009, Setser and Ziemba 2007. In December 2009, Ben Simpfendorfer noted in his blog: “If, as a result of last week’s events, the Western banks retreat further from the Middle East, there’s a good chance the Chinese banks will try to fill the gap. There’s certainly still reason to lend. The Middle East accounts for 36% of the world’s oil production. Of that, Dubai accounts fora small fraction. Unless the rest of the Middle East is planning to build more Dubai-style “Palm Islands”, and so long as energy prices remain high, the region is thus likely to be a decent credit” (www. silkroadeconomy.com, December 2009). Accessed April 9, 2010.

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** Three Phases of Globalization: The Significance of Dubai’s Emergence as a Trading Hub

Roger Ballard

The presence of city states operating as trading hubs is anything but novel in the Indian Ocean region; their emergence long predated European imperial expansion. Nor is the presence of such a hub at the mouth of the Persian Gulf novel; from that perspective, Dubai has simply assumed the long-standing role of Bandar Abbas. However, Dubai differs from its predecessors insofar as it is a product that can be identified as the third (and current) phase of globalization, that in which regions that had been subjected to two centuries of EuroAmerican imperial dominance have begun to turn the tables on their former hegemons. On the back of the liquidity generated by the oil wealth in the city-state’s immediate hinterland, Dubai has emerged as one of the world’s most significant trading hubs. Its central role is closely akin to that of its many historical predecessors: brokerage. However, it is fulfilling that role in a twenty-first-century context, and in doing so its economy is dependent

on three closely interrelated activities: The circulation of value: largely driven by the huge volumes of hard-currency liquidity arising from its exchange-house role in delivering migrant remittances throughout the Indian Ocean region. The circulation of goods: largely driven by the import/export activities of dhows in the Dubai Creek and the long-distance container trade through the port. The circulation of people: as evidenced in the activities of Emirates Airline. All of these activities are implemented on a global scale. Moreover, like its predecessors, the population of Dubai is markedly plural in character. Denizens are far more numerous than citizens, and it is those denizens-the vast majority of whom trace their ancestral roots to the Indian subcontinent — who are primarily responsible for the growth of the city-state's trading activities. Whilst that state of affairs is far from unprecedented, Dubai also owes its success to another feature of the third phase of globalization: the parallel emergence of vast global diasporas 'from below'. The article concludes by exploring the role that transjurisdictionally extended coalitions of reciprocity grounded in commonalties of caste, kin, and sect have played in facilitating the growth of Dubai's globally extended brokerage networks.

From an historical perspective, the presence of city-states operating as trading hubs in the Indian Ocean region is anything but a novel phenomenon. Thriving seaborne trading networks running between Mesopotamia and the Indus valley were already in place four-thousand years ago, and by Roman times, these extended from the upper reaches of the Red Sea to Southern India, on through the Straits of Malacca, and on toward China and Japan. In those early days, few (if any) ships made the trip from one end of the network to the other. Instead, they completed shorter journeys— normally governed by the direction and timing of the monsoons—between well-protected ports in which they could take shelter, make repairs, and unload and reload their cargo. They returned along the route on which they had arrived (Abu-Lughod 1989, Chaudhuri 1985). The emergence of such transhipment centers, which rapidly morphed into trading hubs, was largely determined by considerations of geography, with the result that their locations have remained broadly predictable of the millennia. They include ports at the head and the mouth of both the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf, the mouths of major rivers such as the Indus, the Godavari, and the Ganges, as well as the Irrawaddy, Mekong, Pearl, Yangtze, and Yellow Rivers, as inescapable choke points, such as the mouth of the Red Sea and the Straits of Malacca.

While the availability of a safe and accessible anchorage was a prerequisite forthe emergence of such hubs, their precise location was also driven by (endlessly changing) political considerations. The most successful were those which offered ready access to major urban/imperial centers, but which remained relatively autonomous of their much larger neighbors in political, economic, and military terms. Hence they typically took the form of autonomous city-states controlling a limited hinterland, but sufficiently well armed to protect themselves from external predators, and capable of supporting a stable self-regulating local marketplace. Given that they aimed to facilitate the trading activities of merchants of both local and distant origin, the population of such city-states was invariably strongly polyethnic in character, given the presence of numerous merchant guilds of differing regional and religious origins. Hence, while the marketplace was open to all-comers, the members of each guild organized their own internal affairs on their own preferred terms. As a result, each hub supported merchants, bankers, seamen, and scholars drawn in from similarly structured citystates located hundreds if not thousands of miles away across the ocean, all of which were drawn together in a plural society by the dynamics of the marketplace (Furnivall 1939).

By their very nature trading networks are transjurisdictional in character; and given the geographical extent of the networks which could readily be developed in a region extending from the Indian Ocean to the sea of Japan, its traders have always been drawn from, and have articulated their activities within, a multiplicity of religiously and ethnically specific diasporic networks. Traders from a wide variety of regions, and affiliated to an equally wide range of cultural and religious traditions, have played particularly prominent roles in differing historical periods. There can be little doubt that Muslim networks—most of which can trace their origins either to the Red Sea or the Persian Gulf—had already begun to play a particularly salient role in this arena well before the onset of the Crusades (Abu-Lughod 1989). Besides being driven by trade rather than military conquest, a further salient feature of these networks was the extent to which the patterns of reciprocity (which underpinned their operation) were grounded in evangelistically oriented Sufi brotherhoods. These activities, in due course, began to attract an ever-growing number of converts from the indigenous populations among whom they had settled (Eaton 1993, Ho 2006). Hence, by the fourteenth century,

the great majority of both traders and seamen operating across the vast stretches of ocean between East Africa and China were followers of Islam; moreover, converts to Islam had become a salient presence in major cities throughout India, China, South-East Asia, and Indonesia.

Although the networks, which underpinned these developments, were in no sense imperial in character (as they were not grounded in military firepower), they were, nevertheless, highly sophisticated vehicles for longdistance communication, of which scholars also began to take advantage. Ibn Battuta (1304–1368) was one the most sophisticated exponents of this kind of scholarly exploration. Having qualified as a legal scholar in Fez, he set off across the Maghreb on hajj to Mecca in 1325, but in doing so took a circuitous route to his goal, travelling overland through Egypt, Syria, Persia, and Turkey before heading south to Mecca. From there he took advantage of seaborne networks to journey onward down the Red Sea to Aden and then to Hormuz, from where he set off overland to India by way of the Emirates of Khorasan. He travelled widely within the Sultanate of Delhi, which by then exercised control over the greater part of the subcontinent, before setting off for China. Throughout his journey, his approach to travel was leisurely, given his endless curiosity with respect to the wonders he encountered, together with his capacity to accept temporary appointments as a qazi whenever he found himself short of funds. Hence, when his ship was delayed by adverse winds—causing him to miss the fleet of junks which sailed back once a year to China (by taking advantage of the favourable monsoons)—Ibn Battuta responded to an invitation to visit the Maldive Islands (all of whose inhabitants had converted to Islam) to act as their qazi. The following year, he returned to Calicut to catch a ship to Java, and from there to Zaitun, China’s main commercial entrepot, from where he eventually retraced his steps more or less directly to Fez, nearly three decades after he had originally set out.

Against that background, one of the most striking features of his detailed memoir (Battuta 1829) was that at no point does he appear to have felt that he had stepped outside the world of Islam. To be sure, he frequently visited locations in which Muslims only made up a minority of the local population, and where the rulers were emphatically not Muslim—as in China, for example, which he also reported was the wealthiest country in the world. Nevertheless, it is quite clear that wherever he went, Ibn Battuta

encountered thriving Muslim communities, whose members were very happy to welcome the presence of an itinerant Islamic scholar. In addition, it is equally clear, that even if these distant, ethnic colonies had originally been established by migrants, by the time he arrived, the great majority of their members were indigenous converts to the faith.

*** The Origins of Globalization

Despite innumerable specialist studies in the fields of Islamic, South Asian, and Chinese history; as well as the efforts of scholars such as Abu-Lughod, Chaudhuri, Darwin, Frank, and Gordon to establish the character of the preexisting global order, the premises around most popular accounts of the contemporary dynamics of globalization are still remarkably Eurocentric in character. As a result, it is still widely assumed that these post-Columbian processes of globalization were unprecedented in character. This is most misleading. Although the outcome of these entrepreneurial adventurers' navigational skills undoubtedly flagged the beginning of what eventually proved to be a major turning point in global affairs, their achievements were in no way transcribed onto a tabula rasa.

In comparison with their Asiatic counterparts, the inhabitants of Europe's many peninsulas came late to the field of truly oceanic voyaging. To be sure, their trading networks around the Mediterranean and the Black Sea, as well as out along the Atlantic coast to Britain and then to the Baltic were of ancient origin; but geography stood in the way of further expansion. The Suez Isthmus, on the one hand, and the stormy seas of the Atlantic, barred European seamen from direct access to the much more extensive Asiatic shipping networks. It was not until the end of the fifteenth century that the shipbuilding and navigational technology (in this relatively underdeveloped western corner of the Asiatic landmass) enabled European seamen to surmount the impact of Atlantic storms, and hence find their way around both the Cape of Good Hope and Cape Horn. Finally, they had direct access to the Indo-Pacific navigational universe, and to the fabled marketplaces of 'the Indies.'

However, they did not find the going easy. As European adventurers swiftly discovered, the prosperity of ‘the Indies’ was grounded in a complex system of long-distance mercantile exchange. This was driven by the large- scale manufacture of ceramics and silk textiles from China, cotton textiles from India, pearls from the Gulf, and huge quantities of rice from all of the region’s tropical deltas (to feed the population of the region’s rapidly expanding metropolitan and manufacturing centers). The resulting trading networks routinely took advantage of the alternating monsoon, and were consequently as spatially extensive as they were oceanic in character, thereby generating a steady growth in overall levels of economic activity—no less in terms of extraction and agriculture than in manufacturing—across the entire region. So, by the end of the fifteenth century, levels of prosperity in the oriental part of the Asiatic land mass were far superior to those enjoyed by the inhabitants of its far western fringes (Frank 1998, Gordon 2008).

Despite the fact that the Asiatic trading networks of this period were far more extensive than those which ran from the Mediterranean around Europe’s many Atlantic peninsulas to the Baltic, the inhabitants of this marginalized region have long cherished the view that the exploits of Columbus and Magellan marked the beginning of the processes which we now know of as globalization. The facts are otherwise. The predominantly Muslim networks whose roots we can trace back to the Gulf were by no means the only show in town: The achievements of the Chinese during this period were just as spectacular.

*** The Achievements of Zeng He’s Treasure Fleets

While the Chinese—and, more specifically, the inhabitants of Fujian province—had been just as active in long-distance trade by sea as their Arab counterparts, their achievements in this sphere reached a spectacular apogee less than a century before Vasco da Gama rounded the Cape of Good Hope: Zhu Di (r. 1402–1424) seized the Dragon Throne. Given that the new Emperor was a usurper—he acquired his position by military means, rather than by descent—Zhu Di spent the greater part of his reign investing heavily in initiatives that would serve to reinforce the scale and splendor of the Imperial Throne, in an effort to reinforce the legitimacy of his own position. Of all those initiatives, one of the most spectacular was a series of six long-

distance voyages made by huge, specially constructed trading junks under the command of one of his leading Commanders, Zeng He.

The objective of these voyages was quite explicitly to globalize his Empire. China's Emperors had always identified themselves as Sons of Heaven, whose role was consequently to provide beneficent guidance and support to all his subjects—the inhabitants of the 'Middle Kingdom.' In consequence of this vision of their place in the universe, the Chinese had long identified themselves as the articulators of a superior civilization, to which all their immediate neighbors could and should be expected to pay obeisance, and in due course to emulate. But having claimed the Dragon throne, Zhu Di sought to engage in an even grander initiative: one which looked far beyond East Asia and its associated archipelagos, since its aim was to bring the whole world, whether known or unknown, under the protective umbrella of the Dragon Throne. Zeng He's voyages were designed to implement precisely that objective. Nevertheless, as Levathes carefully emphasizes, the Chinese understanding of their Imperial project was markedly different from that which their Western European counterparts were about to unleash. As she puts it in her illuminating study of Zeng He's voyages:

<quote>

As far as the Chinese [already] knew in the early centuries of the Christian era, there was little of consequence beyond the boundaries of their empire. If one owned everything, what was the point of going out and conquering it? The European concept of a militant, crusading colonialism beyond the necessity of creating a favourable climate for east-west trade demeans the Chinese ideal of an all-powerful, semidivine emperor, and thus never occurred to Zhu Di. Prosperity was the reward for allegiance to the Dragon Throne; it would instil a greater loyalty in barbarian people than could be mustered with garrisons and foot soldiers. In any event, as the Hongwu emperor reasoned at the beginning of the Ming Dynasty, it was foolish to try to support garrisons halfway around the world, so neither Zhu Di nor his successors tried to do so. It would take European colonial powers another four hundred years to reach the same conclusion. (Levathes 1994:146)

</quote>

Each of Zeng He’s voyages (in pursuit of this Imperial goal) were successively larger, and the fourth—launched in 1412—was one of the most politically successful. The fleet included 63 vessels with a total crew of 28,560. Moreover, this time the fleet sailed far beyond the familiar seas of East Asia. Having called at a series of ports in the Malaysian archipelago, the fleet passed through the Straits of Malacca, and went on to call at the Maldives, Cochin, and Hormuz, before sailing down the coast of East Africa to Malindi, whose ruler presented Zeng He with a much prized gift—a giraffe! But, while the object of this voyage was to establish the Emperor’s moral hegemony throughout the known world, it was in no sense a voyage of conquest: rather, it was conceived as an extension of Zhu Di’s protective umbrella, which was underpinned not so much by force as by an elaborate pattern of mutual reciprocities.

One source of reciprocity was trade. Before leaving Fujian, each of the major treasure ships, which constituted the core of the fleet—each around 400 feet long and 160 feet wide—were loaded with trade goods: vast quantities of blue and white porcelain, teas, and silk cloth. Upon their return, they not only brought similar quantities of exotic goods which had been purchased overseas, including pearls from the Gulf, but ambassadors from all of the major city-states they had visited, who were in due course presented before the Dragon Throne itself. That underpinned the second major objective of the expedition. Once the ambassadors (and sometimes the rulers themselves) had expressed fealty to the Emperor, and accepted lavish gifts in return, the opinion was that the visitors had willingly subjected themselves to Chinese suzerainty. As Levathes puts it:

<quote>

At this moment Chinese influence abroad was at its peak. All the important trading ports in the Indian Ocean basin and China seas—from Korea and Japan throughout the Malay Archipelago and India to the east African coast—were at least nominally under Chinese authority, and acknowledged the suzerainty of the Dragon Throne. From this lofty pinnacle, China could have consolidated its position and become the dominant power in shaping the modern world. While Europe was still emerging from the Dark Ages, China, with her navy of giant junks, was poised to become the colonial power of the sixteenth century and tap the riches of the globe.... But the emperor was

already beginning to focus his and the empire’s energies inward. That moment at the pinnacle would barely last for five years (Levathes 1994:142)

</quote>

Although Zhu Di was beginning to run into problems of Imperial overstretch, for the cost of mounting these vast expeditions had begun to challenge the Empire’s vast resources, Zeng He was nevertheless despatched on two further expeditions, of which the fifth appears to have been the most ambitious of all. This time his objective was global in a scientific sense: to make the astronomical observations required to facilitate accurate navigation in the southern hemisphere, and in that sense to chart the globe.

No less than their Arab counterparts, the Chinese had for centuries utilized the Pole Star as a fixed point in the heavens around which to organize their navigational fixed point. However, once they sailed into the southern hemisphere, their lodestar disappeared beneath the horizon, and there was no southern equivalent. The Southern Cross might point due south, but Canopus, the nearest equivalent to Polaris, was more substantially set off from the celestial pole. It followed that if they were to map the globe with any degree of accuracy, China’s cartographers needed to establish a series of fixed points in the southern hemisphere to match those whose location they had already established from their observations in the north. This, argues Menzies (2002), was the central objective of Zeng He’s fifth and most spectacularly extended expedition. Since facilitating the prospect of global triangulation was the key to the whole exercise, two objectives were crucial: firstly to establish the precise latitude at which Canopus passed directly overhead, which turned out to lie at 52^o 40’ South; and secondly to make astronomical calculations of the longitude of at least three anchor points along that line of latitude. Moreover, if they were to make the most of their existing cartographic knowledge, it would be extremely convenient if one of those anchor points was as close as possible to half the world away from Beijing, the ‘Greenwich’ of Chinese geography.

Applying a navigator’s eye[96] to the charts, as well as all of the available documentary and archaeological evidence, Menzies came to a startling conclusion—namely, that Zeng He ordered a substantial portion of his fleet

to sail westward after they had rounded the Cape of Good Hope, before turning south toward the latitude of Canopus—and most especially toward the antipodes of Beijing. Out in the wilds of the South Atlantic, the Falkland Islands turned out to be a close approximation to that point. While they may have provided an excellent observation point for the astronomers, these largely barren islands provided nothing with which to replenish the fleet's resources. But as Menzies goes on to note, if they had followed the path of Canopus a few hundred miles further to the west, they would have reached the much more fertile shores of South America. Adding all the information available to him together, Menzies concludes that

<quote>

Taking advantage of one of the periods of quiet weather frequently found in an Antarctic summer, Admiral Hong Bao returned due west from the Falkland Islands to Patagonia to replenish his supplies. Still underneath Canopus at 52°40'S, he would have found what appeared to be a safe anchorage in a large bay just south of Cape Virgines. Unknown to him, the bay was the entrance to a strait leading to the Pacific. As he entered the bay, a ferocious current running at up to six knots would have dragged his fleet south-westwards through the strait like water down a plughole.

</quote>

<quote>

By the next morning the fleet had been sucked halfway through the strait. At last out of the current, they would have found themselves off the Brunswick Peninsula, clearly identified on the Piri Reis map. By now the fleet was south of Canopus, and Hong Bao would have wished to sail north to get underneath his reference point once again, the latitude from which he was to chart the world to the east. The strait becomes narrower and narrower leading into the Canal Geronomino—less than a mile wide and far too narrow for his huge ships to manoeuvre.

</quote>

<quote>

As a result, the fleet was forced to reverse its course, and hence the cartographers drew the Canal Geronomino as a river, just as it must have appeared to them. Back off the Brunswick Peninsula, the fleet would have taken the Canal Magdalena south-westwards, entering the Pacific Ocean near Isla Aguirre.... The ‘Strait of Magellan’ had been discovered and charted by a complete accident. (Menzies 2002:136)

</quote>

But despite the expedition’s magnificent cartographic achievements—which included detailed maps of the coastline of the South Shetland Islands, the Kerguelen Islands, the Coast of western Australia, the western coast of South America, parts of New Zealand, and the eastern coast of Australia—Zeng He did not receive a hero’s welcome when his fleet finally returned home. In his absence, his patron, Zhu Di, had been marginalized by his ambitious son Zhu Gaozhi in a palace coup. Zhu Gaozhi gained power as a result of throwing in his lot with the Mandarins, who had by now taken the view that Zhu Dhi’s projects had become so cripplingly expensive that they had begun to exhaust the massive resources of the Middle Kingdom. Zhu Gaozhi gave the order that efforts to extend Confucian harmony on a global scale should cease. He cancelled all further naval initiatives, his magnificent fleet was either broken up or left to rot at their moorings, and he issued orders to destroy all of the maps, charts, and descriptive records that his surveyors had so carefully prepared. During the course of the ensuing Ming dynasty, China looked inward rather than outward—leaving Magellan with an opportunity to lay the foundations of a second phase of globalization by, among other things, following in his Chinese predecessors footsteps—for as it turned out, Zeng He’s efforts had not gone entirely in vain.

All the seamen on board his fleet would have been well aware of the immense value of the charts and sailing instructions that had been prepared in the course of their adventures—most especially so since many of them would, like Zeng He himself, have been Muslims. Hence regardless of the new Emperor’s instructions, this vital information was preserved, and found its way back along the sea lanes to Islam’s Mesopotamian heartlands, and then to western Europe’s leading maritime powers. As Menzies notes:

<quote>

The existence of the strait leading from the Atlantic to the Pacific was well known both to the King of Spain and Magellan before he set sail. He took with him on the voyage a marine chart that showed the strait and the Pacific Ocean beyond it. The contract he had signed with the king specified the aims of the voyage—to sail westwards for the Spice Islands—and the share of the profits each was to enjoy. Magellan wanted knowledge of the strait to be restricted to himself alone to prevent others from following in his wake and claiming their own share of the riches that awaited him, but the King of Spain was in no position to grant his request. The Portuguese held the master chart. (Menzies 2002)

</quote>

Even if he was following in the footsteps of the Chinese, Magellan's achievement was momentous, for it served to usher in a second phase of globalization. Nevertheless, it would be a mistake to assume that the European's newfound capacity to circumnavigate the globe placed them in a position of global dominance. Their ships, designed to weather Atlantic storms, were exceptionally seaworthy, and were designed with warfare in mind, as much as with trade. It followed that if they encountered Asian merchantmen (whose ships were not designed to carry cannons) at sea, the intruders were in a position to attack them, and to loot their cargo. While this enabled the Portuguese to engage in something close to piracy throughout the region's sea-lanes—most especially since the Chinese were no longer attempting to maintain suzerainty over them—successful participation in peaceful trade proved to be far more problematic. With the exception of their capacity to construct heavily armed sea-going warships, European manufacturing technologies were so inferior to those in Asia that they had little to offer in exchange for textiles, ceramics, and spices (Das Gupta and Pearson 1987).

*** The Role of 'Free Money'

If the Spanish and Portuguese had sought to rely solely on their own domestic economic resources, the chances of them being able to make their mark on a global scale would have been remote.

Nevertheless, they swiftly gained access to what Frank (1999) has aptly described as ‘free money’: the immensely productive silver mines in Mexico and the Andes. These developments provided the financial foundations of the next Euro-centric phase of globalization. However, the switch did not happen overnight: rather it took the greater part of three centuries to complete.

As we have seen, the European pioneers’ newfound capacity to circumnavigate the globe was not a sufficient basis on which to participate in the thriving markets into which they had at long last gained access, since they had nothing to sell. Piracy was an alternative option, but one which was bound to create a backlash in the end. From this perspective the silver mines of the ‘New World’, together with the slave labor used to extract it (much of which was shipped over from Africa) proved to be a godsend. The cost of production was low, the scale of the silver deposits proved enormous, and the demand for silver, which provided the basis for coinage in both India and China, was insatiable. As a result, Europeans were able to use the silver extracted from the mines in their newly acquired possessions in America to buy their way into the thriving marketplaces of South and East Asia, thereby facilitating the emergence of a truly global economy.

Nevertheless, the sudden availability of cheap wealth had complex consequences. From an Asiatic perspective, the arrival of huge volumes of financial liquidity from overseas was thoroughly advantageous: it boosted the scale of manufacturing and trading activity throughout the region. However, its consequences for both Spain and Portugal soon proved to be far less rosy. Members of the Iberian elite initially enjoyed immense prosperity because of their access to newfound wealth. But the capacity to use their ‘free money’ to import whatever they wanted rapidly undermined the productive base of the Iberian economy, and even though the newfound wealth soon began to filter through to other parts of Europe, the whole region still had a great deal of catching up to do. Their delivery of vast quantities of liquidity into Asiatic marketplaces was no act of charity, and still less of hegemony: it was a consequence of their efforts to scramble their way into a rapidly expanding global economy.

However, change was in the air. As European traders became steadily more significant players in global commerce—in which they were still far from being a dominant force—new trading hubs gradually began to emerge in locations that suited European priorities. Hormuz, Manila, Goa, and Macau were early Iberian favorites, while Bombay, Madras, Calcutta, Singapore, and Hong-Kong came to the fore as the British East India Company built its own favored set of hubs. These initiatives in no way diminished what the Europeans began dismissively to characterize as the ‘country trade’: Asian trading networks still preferred their own hubs and remained as active as ever.

*** Globalization and Empire: The Gulf Experience

So long as the European presence in Asia was restricted to a relatively small number of trading hubs—as continued to be the case well into the eighteenth century—their political impact in the region was strictly limited. However, as the centuries passed, the profits extracted from their colonies in the Americas grew steadily larger, not least because of the ever more extensive use of slave labor. As Europeans began to borrow and merchandise Asiatic manufacturing technologies, and to invest heavily in military training, the tables gradually began to turn. In the latter part of the seventeenth century, they began to extend their activities well beyond the narrow confines of their trading hubs, and, as their military might grew, they challenged, and ultimately, overturned successive Asiatic Empires. Therefore, in the period between the upset of the Mughal Empire and the sacking of the summer palace outside of Beijing, the Dutch, the French, and, above all, the British were able to spread their Imperial tentacles over the entire region. During the first decade of the twentieth century (five centuries after the first phase of (Asiatic) globalization reached its apogee), the second (Euro-American) phase of globalization achieved an even more dramatic position of virtually unchallenged global hegemony.

These developments had far-reaching consequences in the Gulf; in both socio-political and in economic terms. Besides providing an artery between the fertile lands of Mesopotamia and the far-reaching spaces of the Indian Ocean, the Gulf also marks a disjunction between two major cultural and linguistic traditions: those of the Arabs to the south and west, and of the

Persians to the north and east. In the period during which European empires came to the fore it also marked the boundary between two major Asiatic Empires: that of the Ottoman Sultanate with its headquarters in Istanbul, and that of the Safavid dynasty in Persia. The latter enjoyed a period of splendor at the beginning of the sixteenth century, but subsequently fell into decay, replaced by a series of short-lived and less powerful dynasties during the course of the eighteenth century. While both regimes managed to avoid formal subordination to external powers, the British nevertheless regarded the whole region as the backyard of their Indian Raj. Besides establishing a powerful diplomatic presence in Tehran, they also established a network of political agents to keep a careful eye on developments in the string of settlements along the southern and western shores of the Gulf that had been subject to Ottoman suzerainty.

European presence in the region was not unprecedented. Early in the sixteenth century, the Portuguese captured the island of Hormuz, from where they sought to implement their cartaz system, such that all ships passing in and out of the Gulf paid for the privilege of doing so.[97] While local traders were outraged at being taxed in this way (not least because their Portuguese rivals were exempt), they soon found ways of evading the patrols which monitored the straits. Nor was that all: In 1619, the British East India Company established a ‘factory’—a trading station—on the mainland close to the island of Hormuz, and supplied Shah Abbas with ships, which he used to drive out the Portuguese. In return for its assistance, the Company received exceptional trading facilities at Bandar Abbas, as well as a share in the port’s customs duties.

While the expulsion of the Portuguese led to a substantial growth in trade between Bombay and Basra, it did not take long before another bugbear for those involved in long-distance trade began to emerge: piracy. Although rainfall along the southern shores of the Gulf was so slight as to render agriculture impossible, with the result that most members of its sparse population made their living ether as nomads or as pearl fisherman, its numerous creeks provided ideal hiding places from which predators could emerge to pounce on dhows passing up and down the Gulf. Their activities became steadily more salient during the course of the eighteenth century, and eventually attracted the attention of the Royal Navy. Since the coastline was manifestly unsuitable for colonization, the British imposed a series of

‘agreements’ on local tribes, which eventually culminated in the signing a ‘Perpetual Maritime Truce’ in 1853. The Truce recognized the sovereignty of five tribal Sheikhs and provided them with protection from each other and outside forces in return for allowing their administrations to be ‘guided’ by a ‘British Resident’ responsible to the Governor of the Bombay Presidency. The creation of the so-called ‘Trucial States’ had far-reaching consequences. Although piracy had to be abandoned, each of the five Sheikhdoms was able to enhance its political and spatial integrity, as well as to reinforce the security of their markets under the umbrella of British suzerainty. As this occurred, all five Emirs also took the opportunity to reinforce their authority. Most Residents used only the lightest of touches in exercising their powers. Their central mission was to ensure that the Emirs, whose authority they guaranteed, remained powerful enough to restrain piracy. Otherwise, they were generally left alone (Davidson 2008, 2009).

*** The Al-Maktoum Initiative

When Britain’s first resident visited the region in the 1820s, he reported that the settlement at the mouth of the Dubai Creek, while nominally subordinate to Abu Dhabi, appeared to be largely autonomous of the larger settlement further down the coast. Its 1,200 or so inhabitants lived in small houses clustered around a small fort constructed by the Portuguese centuries beforehand.

Dubai began to gain great significance later in the century when a major dispute within Abu Dhabi’s ruling al-Nahyan clan led Maktoum bin Buti and a group of merchants to move up the coast to Dubai. Having taken control, the al-Maktoums promptly took steps to increase the wealth of their newly acquired Sheikdom by actively encouraging commercial activities. Taking advantage of the creek’s position as a safe haven, they set about encouraging yet more merchants—initially from the Persian side of the Gulf, and then from the west coast of India—to establish a presence on it banks. It follows that the establishment of Dubai as a commercial hub did not come about simply because the creek was conveniently located: there were many other potential candidates for this role scattered around the mouth of the Gulf. Rather it owed its success to the initiatives unleashed by the al-Maktoums. In sharp contrast to their neighbors, the Emirs of Dubai actively

encouraged commercial initiatives. Merchants from distant lands received a warm welcome and customs fees, port fees, and vessel licence fees were largely abolished. By the turn of the century Dubai’s suq had become the key hub for distribution of goods throughout the entire lower Gulf, a region stretching from Qatar to Muscat, and from Bushehr to Bandar Abbas on its northern coast.

Dubai consequently entered the twentieth century under the security of the British Imperial umbrella (a further prerequisite for its initial success) and at a time when global trading networks were rapidly expanding because of the switch from sail to steam. In a further coup, in 1904, the al-Maktoums persuaded the British India Steam Navigation Company to schedule its vessels to call in at Dubai as they steamed back and forth between Bombay and Basra. Nor was this the end of the line. Since Dubai had already established itself as a regional hub, the Creek had become the base for a huge fleet of dhows carrying an ever-increasing volume of goods back and forth to smaller ports lying on both the northern and the southern shores of the lower Gulf. Given the absence of forests in the region, the great majority of these dhows were constructed in ports lying along the coast of western India, where their crews were also recruited.

Hence, while the arrival of British steamships added to the port’s prestige, this in no way crowded what the Europeans disdainfully dismissed as ‘the country trade’ out of the market. Rather the dhow trade thrived alongside that of the steamships; and when sails were replaced with powerful marine diesel engines, dhows could compete with their larger counterparts over longer distances. Dubai-based trading networks began to cover a wide arc reaching from Somalia to the west coast of India.

*** The Worm Begins to Turn

In the aftermath of its exertions during World War II, Britain’s imperial pretensions were well nigh exhausted. India (and Pakistan) gained their independence in 1947, and in the aftermath of the Suez debacle in 1956, Britain found it was unable even to maintain a naval presence in the Indian Ocean. Under these circumstances, the status accorded to the Trucial States

became unsustainable, and in 1971, the newly constituted United Arab Emirates (UAE) emerged as its successor. By then it was also apparent that vast quantities of oil lay beneath the waters of the Gulf and its hinterland, bringing the prospect of delivering vast wealth into the hands of those who could claim jurisdiction over it. However, if British colonial dominance was the first to crumble, it was not long before the monopolistic powers that the Anglo-American oil companies had arrogated to themselves suffered the same fate. Once their operations had been nationalized, OPEC succeeded in redoubling the price of oil in the late 1970s, with the result that the region's oil-rich jurisdictions suddenly had access to untold wealth.

While the UAE was a major beneficiary of these developments, the distribution of oil between the Sheikhdoms was not only uneven, but inversely related to the size of their populations. Hence while the tiny but relatively well-populated Sheikdoms in the mountainous region at the mouth of the Gulf had little oil, vast quantities were found to lie been the huge but sparsely populated territory of Abu Dhabi to the west. Set in the middle, Dubai found it only had access to moderate quantities of the vital resource, and true to their entrepreneurial outlook, the al-Maktoums set about exploiting those resources as soon as they were free to do so. Despite having signed their first agreement with the British-controlled Iraq Oil Company in the late 1930s, it was not until 1969 that oil began to flow under the aegis of Dubai Petroleum. Production reached a peak of 420,000 barrels a day in 1991: but production is steadily declining, as new fields are undiscovered. By contrast, production in neighboring Abu Dhabi got off to a much slower start. However, it eventually emerged that somewhere in the order of 10 percent of global reserves lay buried beneath Abu Dhabi's seas and sands. It follows that the al-Nahyans are not worrying about the consequences of peak oil anytime soon, and given the small size of the Emirate's population, their capacity to spend the proceeds of the resultant bonanza remains distinctly limited. Abu Dhabi's sovereign wealth fund is now one of the largest in the world, and its enormous holdings of US Treasuries have given it an unprecedented degree of quiet influence in global arenas.

With access to only a fraction of the reserves available to its munificently endowed neighbor, Dubai would have foundered if it had followed a similarly laid-back strategy. Hence, in sharp contrast to the Al-Nahyans, the Maktoums

used the more limited resources to make the most of the foundations that they had laid down long before the discovery of oil.

*** Transjurisdictional Entrepreneurship ‘From Below’

By the mid-1960s, Dubai had already become an active trading hub. From slight beginnings, the tiny settlement at the mouth of the creek had expanded into a city-state with a population close to 100,000 strong, whose core business was long-distance trade. As well as drawing in supplies by both sea and air from all over the world, a fleet of more than 4,000 dhows provided localized resources. In doing so Dubai had developed an infrastructure that was urban in character: Its hinterland was bare desert inhabited by a few Bedouin nomads. With no significant manufacturing sector, the city owed its existence to its suq, and its consequent capacity to act as a trading hub, linking lesser markets elsewhere in the Gulf into regional, and ultimately into global, commercial networks. As we have seen, long-distance trade along these routes was far from a novel phenomenon: such networks had four millennia of history behind them. What has given the networks currently emanating from Dubai their distinctiveness is the changing character of the global economic order within which they have emerged.

As has so often been the case in historical terms, the developments in the Indian subcontinent played a major role in that process. Like many other postcolonial states, newly independent India sought to disentangle itself from links of imperial hegemony by pursuing a policy of economic autarchy. India hoped a self-sustaining, planned economy would facilitate the emergence of a rapidly increasing level of prosperity within a more equitable social order. While the ultimate objective of this policy was worth pursuing, one of its immediate consequences was to allocate far-reaching regulatory powers to the state, further reinforcing the administrative ‘steel frame’ that India inherited from the British Raj. Within the context of a ‘license-permit’ Raj, India’s burgeoning ‘army of bureaucrats’ took for granted that one of their central objectives should be to maintain tight controls over the passage of money and goods across its borders. Enforcing these objectives might have kept the predatory tentacles of Euro-American multinational corporations at bay and may have helped to prevent its own, more affluent

citizens from squirreling away the greater part of their wealth in overseas jurisdictions, thereby placing them beyond the reach of the state’s redistributive objectives.

Nevertheless, as every historian will instantly affirm, efforts to restrict the flow of goods and assets across jurisdictional boundaries invariably precipitate equally inventive strategies by means of which to evade them. Moreover the scale of such evasive activities—pejoratively identified as smuggling—is invariably proportional both to the rigor with which controls are enforced and the level of demand for access to the goods and services which the citizens find have been placed beyond their reach. In these circumstances, it is essential to ask whether the whole exercise was really worth it, most especially when one of the central consequences of this sort of central planning serves only to strangle virtually all forms of commercial activity. It was for these reasons that Indian authorities began to dismantle the most egregious aspects of the licence-permit Raj two decades ago. Since then, Indian entrepreneurs have made the most of the opportunities available in the current phase of globalization. One of the most striking features of these developments is the role Dubai has played in oiling the wheels of progress—not just with respect to India, but also with all manner of similarly ill-structured regimes elsewhere in the region including Iran, Iraq, Pakistan, Afghanistan, and many more.

For at least the past half-century the Indian subcontinent has been Dubai’s most significant trading partner. After India and Pakistan gained their independence in the aftermath of World War II, there was a huge boom in the demand for consumer products, few of which were manufactured within the subcontinent, but the foreign exchange required to buy them was in short supply. Worse still, there was a huge demand for gold, a central component of every dowry. In an effort to sustain the international value of the rupee, the authorities placed tight controls on the import of consumer goods, as well as gold. The outcome was inevitable: The price of gold in India soared way above that in the global marketplace, and consumer goods sold at inflated prices. Huge profits were made by smuggling such goods aboard Dubai-based dhows into a myriad of tiny ports in India and Pakistan—Dubai’s economy prospered enormously.

However, the traffic was by no means one way between Dubai and the subcontinent. While the greater part of this trading activity was facilitated by brokers, traders, and seamen of South Asian origin (who had put down roots in Dubai), their numbers swelled because of Dubai’s construction boom. With a lack of local population to draw upon as a labor force, migrant workers were hired from elsewhere in ever-larger numbers, particularly, from South Asia. Nor was this process unique to Dubai. As oil production boomed in the upper reaches of the Gulf, and most especially in Saudi Arabia, even larger numbers of workers were required to construct the roads, bridges, and terminals required to facilitate the extraction of oil.

Almost without exception, labor migrants arrived on short-stay contracts that required them to leave their families back home. Hence, they routinely saved the greater part of their earnings, which they transferred back home. These three complementary developments enabled Dubai to add a further string to its bow: it emerged as a financial hub.

While the central purpose of the transjurisdictional networks is to facilitate long-distance circulation of people, goods, and information, the smooth articulation of these objectives is invariably dependent on a further prerequisite: the existence of a means of facilitating transjurisdictional flows of value—or, in other words, of money—to support these activities. The underlying logistics of this challenge are easy to appreciate. In the course of shipping large volumes of gold and consumer goods to India—and indeed to a wide range of other destinations in the region—Dubai’s traders purchased their supplies in readily negotiable US dollars, before despatching them to be sold to customers who were only in a position to pay for them in the much less readily negotiable exchange-controlled rupee. Meanwhile, locally employed migrant workers were paid in readily negotiable dirhams. However, when they sent their savings back home to their kinsfolk, the payout was in rupees. Given the presence of parallel flows of value between the two jurisdictions, the underdeveloped and sclerotic character of formally constituted banking systems, and the severe regulatory restrictions on access to foreign exchange in the region, the opportunities for arbitrage were plain to see. If arrangements could be made to use the value locked up

in migrants’ savings to meet the gold and consumer-goods importers’ dollar-denominated invoices, and for the importers’ rupees to be transferred to migrants’ families, it followed that the articulation of a carefully ordered set of swaps would enable foreign exchange controls, together with the formally constituted banks’ exorbitant fees for transferring penny-packets of value to remote destinations to be systematically circumvented.

*** Hawala

Although the driving force behind this particular form of value swap may have been precipitated by late twentieth century developments, the premises which underpinned them were very familiar to the region’s indigenous traders. In addition to ships (whether of the sea or the desert) on which to carry their goods, and safe and stable marketplaces in which to buy and sell them, the third prerequisite for the implementation of long-distance trade is access to an effective value transfer system, which fulfils the vital function of obviating the need for merchants to transport large quantities of bullion around with them. For at least the past millennium—or to put it another way, for the period during which Muslim merchants have been involved in facilitating long-distance trade—Hawala networks have been one of the most favored means of providing this vital financial service.

Derived from the Arabic root h-w-l, whose basic meaning includes ‘change’ and ‘transform’, the term Hawala is best understood as an exchange of debt. In his classic Introduction to Islamic Law, Schacht (1964) describes it as a means that can extinguish an existing obligation to person A by arranging to transfer it to person B.

<quote>

Hawala is in the first place, a mandate to pay, i.e. I owe something to A but charge B to pay my debt. It can also be an assumption of my debt by B. The practical prerequisite in both cases is that I have a claim against B which is equal to or higher than the claim of A against me.... Normally, therefore, the hawala amounts to an assignment: I assign to A a claim of mine

against B, in order to satisfy a claim of A against me.

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<quote>

One of the practical advantages of this institution is that it enables me to make payments in another place through B. Its effect is the same as that of the suftaja or bill of exchange. This defined as ‘a loan of money in order to avoid the risk of transport’; I lend an amount to B, in order that he may pay it to A in another place. The difference between hawala and suftaja is the obligation of A towards me, which in the case of the hawala is normally supposed as already existing, is, in the case of the suftaja, created on purpose by a payment which I make, and this can be construed only as a loan of money; the transaction is reprehensible, because it is a loan of money from I derive, without giving a countervalue, the advantage of avoiding the risk of transport, but it is not invalid. In practice, I buy from B a draft on the place in question. Historically, the origin of the bill of exchange can be traced to the suftaja and the hawala (Schacht 1964:148–9)

</quote>

Bills of exchange have been a commonplace feature in European banking systems for at least five centuries. What is less well known is that these financial instruments were originally known as avallo in Italian and aval in French: in other words, the underlying concept appears to have been borrowed from Muslim traders operating on the Eastern and Southern shores of the Mediterranean, where such arrangements had already been in use for several centuries (Udovich 1970). Banking—in the sense of the provision of facilities for the implementation of value transfers—and longdistance trade have always gone hand in hand. Hence, as Muslim networks began to play a more steady role during the first phase of globalization, so a parallel network of Hawaladars providing deposit and encashment services emerged in every major trading hub from Cairo to Zaitun. While the origins, technical dimensions, and subsequent development of these networks need not detain us here (Ballard 2005, 2006,

2010), two of their most fundamental features are worth highlighting. First, they were organized in such a way as to be compliant with the risk- and reputation-sharing principles of Islamic Law. Second, their systemic security was grounded in relationships of trust arising from a membership of coalitions of reciprocity (Greif 1989) the Hawaladars created around themselves, in sharp contrast to the much more formal and impersonal relationships of contract that underpinned the financial systems that subsequently developed in Western Europe.

As the second phase of (imperially driven) globalization reached its apogee toward the end of the nineteenth century, the force of European hegemony was so great that these desi, indigenous and so-called ‘informal systems’ were systematically marginalized, with the result that European banks swiftly came to occupy the commanding heights of all imperially grounded financial operations. Nevertheless, this by no means led to the extinction of the region’s indigenous financial institutions and practices: rather, they were pressed outward to the periphery. Hence, when progressively minded modernists—of whom Pandit Nehru was a classic example—took over in the aftermath of the collapse of the British Raj, they routinely assumed that such old-fashioned practices would disappear into the dustbin of history.

*** Dubai’s Role in the Transition From the Second to the Third Phase of Globalization

As the twenty-first century dawns, the modernists’ myopic assumption that the Euro-American cultural and financial practices would of necessity sweep outward like a tsunami, and in doing so endlessly reinforce Euro-America’s condition of global hegemony, has begun to look increasingly threadbare. Indeed, there are clear indications these hubristic expectations may well be on the point of reaching nemesis. To be sure, the prospective third phase of globalization—in which the distribution of wealth and power will swing back from west to east following two centuries of Euro-American hegemony— has not yet fully materialized. Nevertheless, the prospect that this will occur in the near future looks increasingly certain. From that perspective Dubai’s emergence as one of Asia’s leading commercial and trading hubs may well

provide a signpost toward the likely character of institutional structures that are likely to emerge because of these tectonic developments.

Dubai played no direct part in one of the most salient contemporary manifestations of this shift in wealth and power: the relocation of the greater part of the global manufacturing base from Europe and North America to South and East Asia. However, these contemporary processes of entrepreneurially driven globalization ‘from below’ have also been accompanied by two further developments which may prove to be of equal significance in the near future. First, the growth of a multiplicity of transjurisdictional diasporic networks which have enabled millions of migrants emanating from the global South to establish a multitude of overseas ethnic colonies, some of the most significant of which are to be found in the metropolitan heartlands of Euro-America. Second, the way in which each network provides it members with a ready means of circulating information, personnel, and capital on a global basis regardless of jurisdictional boundaries, providing them with entrepreneurial opportunities that run closely parallel to those routinely exploited by multinational corporations. Of course, their institutional foundations differ sharply in character: diasporic networks are strongly personal in character, and hence, rooted in ‘informal’ relationships of kinship and mutual trust, while multinational corporations revolve, at least in principle, around impersonal and formally constituted relationships of contract. Nevertheless, it is idle to suppose—as modernists have been predicting ever since Maine (1861)—that ‘progress’ has a singular destination, such that formal relationships of contract are bound to overwhelm ‘informally’ constituted relationships or reciprocity. As the third phase of globalization takes wing, those equally hubristic expectations may well have to be abandoned as well.

*** The Exchange Houses of Dubai

As we have seen, finance and trade have always gone hand in hand—and no less so in Dubai than anywhere else. Given the growth of their suq as an offshore entrepot through which gold and consumer goods could be surreptitiously supplied to a wide range of regional markets, the Hawaladars of Dubai presented with a rapidly growing commercial customer base. However, the greatest spur to their activities came from

another source: the parallel growth of armies of migrant workers, all seeking a cheap and reliable means of remitting their savings to their families, most of which were located in exactly the same jurisdictions to which Dubai's dhows were delivering gold and consumer goods. The opportunities for Hawala-style arbitrage were plain to see: the only issue was how the financial logistics required to take advantage of them should be implemented.

The bare bones of the solution which emerged were relatively straightforward. The regular constructions of forex swaps of similarly sized tranches of value, composed on the one hand of a multitude of small packets denominated in hard currency (migrant remittances, in other words), in exchange for a much smaller number of substantially larger tranches of less easily negotiable currency (payments in rupees for gold, consumer goods, and so forth) on the other. Although it is unlikely that Dubai's Hawaladars were aware of it, mainline bankers in London were simultaneously developing an almost identical strategy as a means of coping with the UK's recently instituted exchange control regime. As Coyle notes:

<quote>

Currency swaps originally were developed by banks in the UK to help large clients circumvent UK exchange controls in the 1970s. UK companies, seeking to finance their US subsidiaries' operations, were required to pay a premium (known as an exchange equalization premium or the investment premium) when obtaining dollar loans from their banks. The idea behind a swap was to avoid having to pay this premium for dollar borrowing. A bank would identify a UK-based organization that wanted to borrow in dollars and a US-based organization wanting a sterling loan. An agreement would then be negotiated whereby

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<quote>

the UK organization borrowed sterling and lent it to the US company's UK subsidiary.

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<quote>

the US organization borrowed dollars and lent it to the UK company’s US subsidiary.

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No sterling left the UK and no dollars left the US, so there was no requirement to pay the exchange equalization premium on dollars. The benefit of cheaper borrowing could be shared between both parties to the swap, and both the US and UK organizations therefore could pay less for currency debt liabilities than if they had borrowed directly in the foreign currency (sterling or dollars). These early arrangements were called “back-to-back” or “parallel” loans, from which more sophisticated currency swaps were gradually developed over time. (Coyle 2000: 24–25)

</quote>

Although the Hawaladars of the Indian Ocean region exchanged debts rather than loans, they were already old hands at brokering transjurisdictional swaps of this kind. By implementing their swaps they had access to 3 further asset: the ethnically specific transjurisdictionally extended coalitions of reciprocity through which they had always done business, and which could readily be extended to facilitate the construction of collection and delivery processes within the diasporic networks through which migrant workers has found their way to their destinations in the oil-rich regions of the Gulf. At first such initiatives were on small scale: locally well-established figures from specific regions and communities began to establish networks of collection agents—initially in Dubai, and then ever further afield—offering value transfer services to members of the community from which they were themselves drawn, together with a parallel network of distribution agents back in their home base. Once these complementary networks were in place the sponsor was in a position to go into business: having bought gold ingots cheaply at a free market price in Dubai, and despatched them by dhow to one of the many creeks which dot the coastline of both India and Pakistan, the gold could be sold at inflated prices, and the proceeds in rupees

despatched for delivery to migrant workers' homes. While the cost of organizing these logistical procedures was far from negligible, the differential price of gold was sufficiently large for those involved to make a significant profit from the whole enterprise, while also implanting door-to-door value delivery on behalf of migrant workers more swiftly, just as reliably and at a better exchange rate than anything the formally constituted banks were able to offer.

As the volume of such transfers escalated, the system gradually became more organized. The most successful operators began to search out partners based in other regional financial hubs—in Karachi, Bombay, Colombo, and Dacca in the case of South Asian jurisdictions—through whom to broker appropriately sized counter-transfers on a daily basis. Business boomed, especially when the range over counter-transfers expanded to include consumer goods, and then commercial operations throughout South Asia who were unable to obtain permits granting them access to foreign exchange with which to meet hard-currency invoices for the machinery and raw materials that they had imported from overseas. While arrangements of this kind of necessity subverted efforts of local financial jurisdictions to control the flow of hard currency across its borders, it is also arguable that it was precisely this kind of licence/permit Raj that seriously inhibited the growth of the Indian economy until the system began to be dismantled in the early 1990s. Moreover, these developments were part of a global de- regulatory trend. During the latter part of the twentieth century, currency swaps and offshore banking became a steadily more salient feature of the global financial order, no less rife in London and New York than in Karachi and Bombay. It follows that if there was anything distinctive about the deals brokered in Dubai, it lay not in the logistics of the financial exercises being undertaken, but rather in the extent to which 'informal' relationships of personal trust—as opposed to formal relationships of contract- underpinned the whole operation.

*** Oil, Aviation, and Electronics

Over and above the issues discussed so far, twenty-first century Dubai is also a product of three further exigencies. First, that it lies at the heart of an oil-rich region, and that its immediate neighbor—with whose ruling family the al-

Maktoums share a common ancestry—sits atop close to ten percent of global oil reserves. In other words, it lies at the heart of a region that is unlikely to be short of financial capital for the near future. Second, its location could hardly be more ideal for the establishment of a global aviation hub—a role that Emirates Airline has filled with a vengeance, such that long-distance travellers from almost any part of the globe now find it convenient to change planes in Dubai. Last, but not least, Dubai's globally networked entrepreneurs have taken to telecommunications like ducks to water; thereby further empowering their capacity to engage in processes of globalization 'from below' (Smith and Guarnizo 1998).

Right from the outset, the provision of financial services played a key role in these processes. When migrant workers from South Asia initially began to make a beeline for the Gulf, formally constituted banking services were just as ill developed as all other aspects of the regional infrastructure. While the delivery of remittances was a novel enterprise as far as the Hawaladars serving Dubai's well-established trading networks were concerned, the provision of such a service was readily compatible with their established business models. Hence, they were able to meet migrants' demands for financial services more speedily, just as reliably, and above all, more cheaply, than the British Bank of the Middle East, which was initially the only European-style Bank in town.

As construction projects and the associated inflow of migrant workers grew at an exponential pace, not just in the coastal Emirates but across the border in Saudi Arabia, so the demand for value transfer services grew steadily greater. As they did, Dubai was exceptionally well placed to act as a settlement hub through which the resultant flows of liquidity could be brokered and redistributed on a global scale, given that:

- Dubai had already established itself as the regional trading hub for the southern portion of the Gulf before the oil boom took off.

- Financial initiatives pioneered in the city-state could be rolled out from neighboring oil-rich jurisdictions, and in doing so, further re-jigged to provide similar services for members of non-South Asian diasporic networks,

including those emanating from Somalia, Iran, Afghanistan, the Philippines, and Indonesia.

- Once Hawaladars tapped into—and began to emerge from— each of these diasporic networks, these practices became an integral component of the mechanisms by means of which each such network facilitated the circulation of information, of personnel, and above all, of financial resources on a global scale, regardless of transjurisdictional boundaries (Ballard 2009).

However, further exigencies were soon to intervene, of which one of the most significant was the attack on New York's World Trade Center on 9/11. In its aftermath, large clouds of suspicion began to accumulate over the exchange houses of Dubai, and most especially the practice of Hawala, on the grounds that it was a form of 'underground banking' which was widely used by terrorists—including those who blew up the Twin Towers—to finance their nefarious activities. But although that suggestion proved to be false, the press routinely followed briefings from bankers, the police, and the security services to the effect that Hawala networks are merely convenient veils for criminal and terrorist malfeasance, with the result, among other things, that the Hawala has dropped out of public discourse in Dubai, other than as a set of illegitimate practices whose existence is vigorously denied on all sides.

*** Value Transfers in the Twenty-First Century

In his groundbreaking analysis of Hawala networks published in 1999, Passas identified their role as a culturally specific example of a much more general phenomenon: the Informal Value Transfer Systems (I VTS) that labor migrants throughout the world have devised as a means facilitating the transfer of their savings to their kinsfolk back home. In the light of the arguments presented here, a further dimension can be added to this definition. While the roots of this particular manifestation of IVTS lie in the provision of financial services to traders operating in the Indian Ocean region during the first and second phases of globalization, its contemporary format has been comprehensively conditioned by the ever-growing influence of the opportunity structures which have become available during the currently

emergent third phase of globalization, which is presenting an ever wider series of challenges to what remains of the previously established EuroAmerican world order.

Remarkably enough, the current phase of globalization has not precipitated the demolition of jurisdictional boundaries: rather they have been reinforced, most especially as far as those operating from below are concerned. Hence, while Euro-Americans currently enjoy something close to a condition of visa-free travel in most parts of the globe, those holding passports issued by less-favored jurisdictions find themselves facing major obstacles at almost every boundary which they seek to cross. The same sieve-like conditions also apply with respect to value transfers. For those operating in the corporate world of banks and multinational enterprises, jurisdictional boundaries are as porous to value transfer as they are to holders of Euro-American passports. But when it comes to implementing value transfers on an ‘informal’ basis—or in other words, by means of back-to-back settlement swaps within unincorporated networks composed of persons linked by relationships of mutual trust within coalitions of reciprocity—that condition of porosity promptly evaporates. In the absence of the contracts and the central registries around which multinational corporations revolve, unincorporated networks—no matter how cheaply and efficiently they are conducting the task of value transfer— promptly become objects of suspicion, and often, the targets of regulatory intervention. Hence, while there are all manner of parallels between the way in which Dubai operates as an offshore financial center serving jurisdictions in South Asia and the Middle East and the way in which the Cayman Islands and the Bahamas perform a similar role for Wall Street, Singapore for South-East Asia, and Hong-Kong for China, the similarities are routinely overlooked. Why?

In logistical terms, ‘informal’ Hawala networks implementvaluetransfers on much the same basis as their more formally constituted counterparts in the banking sector. However, a key element in their contemporary success derives from their technical and logistical agility. Long before telephony and the internet appeared on the scene, Hawaladars had developed the capacity to construct socially grounded long-distance communication networks, which in turn provided foundations of community-specific coalitions of reciprocity within which guard against malfeasance in the inherently risky business of implementing value transfers. Given that these

foundations were already well established, they were particularly well equipped to take advantage of advances in communications technology. By utilizing ISD telephone networks, mobile and satellite phones, and ultimately the internet they have been able to construct instant and secure channels of data transmission on a global scale, such that they can now implement value transfers on a close to real-time basis. Additionally, since diaspora-based IVTS transfers are brokered through networks whose sole purpose is to facilitate overnight value transmission, Hawaladars can dispense with the redundant paperwork generated by bureaucratically and contractually grounded value transfer systems. They have no need to construct vast and expensive central registries.[98] It follows that by deploying informally grounded 'traditional' methodologies of risk-containment, those deploying such services have been able to leapfrog right over contemporary Euro-American financial institutions, as well as most of their similarly constituted post-colonia! counterparts, whose logistical practices are severely handicapped as a result of their unalloyed commitment to wholly contractually based operational methodologies.

These transformative developments did not crystallize overnight. Until the latter part of the twentieth century Hawaladars' principal customers were merchants and traders. Their contemporary transformation came about when a vast new customer base opened up. But to meet their newfound customers' distinctive needs, new strategies had to be developed. On the one hand they began to tap into the globally distributed networks of reciprocity through which migrants had reached their destinations, and on the other to develop a parallel set of delivery networks reaching down into the specific localities—down to a village level—from which members of each diasporic group were drawn. The initial players were drawn from among the Gulf's earliest pioneers—those who were able to tap into the resources of the respective diasporas—less on a global than a local basis— to construct their logistical networks. And, because IVTS systems maximize their efficiency by directing individual packets of value upwards through a pyramid of consolidation and reconsolidation into ever-larger tranches of value before the ultimate settlement swap takes place, the pioneers had ready-made access to networks within which the necessary processes of consolidation and deconsolidation could be implemented. Before long they were in a position to broker settlement swaps on a similar scale to Dubaibased Hawaladars serving a commercial clientele. During the course of the 1990s, the most successful of these businesses—which frequently brought

remittance and commercial business into a single in-house operation—began to consolidate still further as formally constituted exchange houses.

By the turn of the millennium, the major exchange houses of Dubai were handling throughputs of millions of dollars per day and serving a customer base that reached from North America through Western Europe through to the entire Gulf region, out across the Indian Ocean and through the archipelagos of South East Asia and Australia. Nevertheless, while their operations had become global in extent, key aspects of their operations remained distinctly ‘informal’ in character, since individually brokered back-to-back swaps remained the order of the day. However, informal should not be construed as small scale. By the turn of the millennium, the basic unit of account in top-level swaps was $100,000, substantial multiples of which were lined up to facilitate multi-million-dollar back-to-back swaps on a daily basis.[99] The exchange houses of Dubai, viewed collectively, had emerged as a major hub in the global financial services sector, operating largely—but not exclusively—on behalf of an Asian clientele.

*** The Impact of 9/11

In terms of the analytical perspective adopted in this paper, the events of 9/11 were yet another example of the growing force of globalization from below. Insofar as they led to the unfortunate collapse of the twin icons, future historians may conclude that its symbolism runs parallel to Lord Elgin’s destruction of the Summer Palaces in Beijing on October 18,1860. Examined in close focus, the events of 9/11 demonstrated the extent to which the most powerful of Euro-American Empires was wholly unprepared, such that nemesis might be much closer at hand than they could ever imagine.

Although the events of 9/11 were politically driven, rather than economically driven, they were a clear harbinger of what was to come. It is worth remembering that the terrorists who turned three American Airliners into weapons of mass destruction justified their actions as a response to the deployment of Euro-America’s dominance in Palestine, Iraq, and the Islamic world at large. Last, but not least, one of the principal reasons why they were

able to succeed derived from the American authorities' perspective that such a tragic event was quite literally inconceivable.

The events of 9/11 were, as viewed by the United States, as well as most of the world, an outrageous affront, and one that demanded an instant response. The most overt dimension of that response was military in character and political in effect: regime change in Afghanistan and Iraq. From our perspective, a further initiative was just as significant: a parallel effort to solidify New York's position as its ultimate and unchallengeable hub. This objective was not explicitly articulated. Instead, the US Patriot Act[100], which passed through Congress within six weeks of 9/11, was justified—prevent terrorists, drugs smugglers, and other similar malfeasants from causing others to suffer the same fate as those of the Twin Towers.

The US authorities also had an immediate target in mind on this front: what they described as 'the shadowy system of underground banking known as Hawala'. One such network, al-Barakat, based in Dubai but primarily dedicated to serving the Somali diaspora, was swiftly identified as the route through which the perpetrators of 9/11 received the funds to finance their activities, and was promptly closed down by the US authorities. Thereafter, IVTS networks of all kinds not only got an extremely bad name, but also began to be harassed by regulatory authorities in all parts of the globe. Taking advantage of the status of the US dollar as the ultimate medium of exchange in the global financial order, the financially oriented chapters of the Patriot Act were designed, among other things, to ensure that all the non-formal financial operations would be frozen out of the global financial system.

The means of achieving these objectives seemed, at least on the face of things, to be relatively innocuous: namely an instance that all transactions passing through US money markets should be fully compliant with the AML/CFT[101] and KYC[102] regulations set out in the Patriot Act. However, the real sting came from a further requirement: that foreign banks operating correspondent accounts with US Banks—a necessary prerequisite for gaining access to New York's dollar-denominated forex market—comply with those regulations in all facets of their financial activities. In doing so, the United States brilliantly constructed a global regulatory regime with which all

formally constituted banks would have to comply, regardless of the location of domestic jurisdiction, if they wished to sustain their footholds in New York. Its objectives were to permanently institutionalize the US Treasury's—and hence the New York money markets' central position in the global financial order. Not surprisingly, this is a prospect that the Wall Street banks welcomed with open arms. The best part of a decade later, these initiatives have begun to look seriously threadbare. Efforts by the US Treasury and their allies to bring Asiatic financial practices into conformity with their own preferred expectations have proved to be just as challenging.

*** The 'Disappearance' of Hawala

This is not to suggest that these efforts to sustain American dominance have left IVTS networks untouched: rather, they have added several additional dimensions to their ongoing development. The immediate change has been cosmetic: the terms Hawala and Hawaladar have simply disappeared from public discourse, especially in Dubai. Exchange houses vigorously refute that they are or ever have been involved in Hawala transactions, backed up by threats of libel action. Meanwhile, at a more practical level, the new regime has led to the reinforcement of a series of moves which were already in motion prior to 9/11. By the turn of the millennium, most of Dubai's larger exchange houses had established accounts with one of Wall Street's major banks, as well as in a range of more exotic offshore locations. The driving force behind these developments was clear enough: the scale of their operations had grown so large and their largest swaps had grown to such a scale that they could only be executed in New York, even if they were brokered in Dubai. Like it or not, Hawala networks were already a component of the global financial order, as the Wall Street banks that held their accounts were well aware. Moreover, there are good reasons to suppose that the banks would have been loath to lose this potentially lucrative business.

Nevertheless, the implications of the Patriot Act could not be ignored, and since AML/CFT compliance was a sine qua non for the maintenance of relationships with their American banking partners, the exchange houses promptly announced that they were in the midst of bringing themselves into compliance with the relevant regulatory

requirements. More significantly, the exchange houses have also set about ‘formalizing’ their value collection and distribution networks. Their favored way of doing so has been to set up wholly owned LLCs in each of the jurisdictions in which they operate. Then, by recruiting members of established networks of retail Hawaladars to act as their agents, thereby enabling them to conduct their transjurisdictional financial affairs on almost exactly the same basis as the treasury departments of major multinational corporations. As far as value flows are concerned, local agents are instructed to transfer cash receipts from retail customers into a central jurisdictional pot, a bank account held by the LLC, while all the back office maneuvers required to implement processes of consolidation, transjurisdictional settlement, deconsolidation, and delivery have been back-sourced to Dubai. Meanwhile, the messaging system required to implement the whole operation is conducted on an ‘informal’ basis.

Having made these adjustments, most of the larger exchange houses have continued to strengthen their strategic alliances with major Wall Street banks. They did not have to try very hard to do so. In the face of the looming credit crunch, Euro-American financial institutions have become ever more interested in tapping into the exponentially rising volume of migrant remittances, particularly if this enables them to build closer alliances with the indigenous institutions based in the oil-rich Gulf’s principal financial hub.

*** Conclusion

The current Euro-American credit crunch has had a severe impact on the most physically salient feature of Dubai’s booming economy: its malls, hotels, and spectacular initiatives in residential property development. If these overt features of the city’s urban landscape have hardly received a mention in my discussion so far, it is because these developments have had little if anything to do with Dubai’s emergence as a financial and trading hub, serving members of numerous non-European diasporic networks (Ballard 2009, 1988).

Viewed from a more global perspective, Dubai owes its emergence as a trading hub to its successful emulation of the strategies followed by its many predecessors throughout the region. Over and above its fulfilment of the necessary prerequisites for the construction of such a hub—a freestanding city-state with a good harbor, subject to the control of an independent ruler farsighted enough to give unstinted support to all kinds of commercial activities—the Maktoums of Dubai found themselves in the right place at the right time. Just as the second phase of globalization was reaching its apogee, they were canny enough to attract a growing body of merchants with a specialist interest in long-distance trade—all under the convenient protection of Britain's Indian Raj. The discovery of oil, the evaporation of the British Raj, and the steadily increasing global significance of Asiatic diasporic initiatives has enabled Dubai to unleash the entrepreneurial inventiveness of its merchants and traders in such a way as to enable the city to become a major hub in the rapidly expanding third phase of globalization.

From this perspective, the city's most significant institutional features are not the frothy exuberance of the Burj Dubai and the Palm Jumeirah, but rather its port, its traders and exchange houses, and its airport, from where Emirates Airline has turned Dubai into one of the most significant hubs for long-distance travel throughout the northern hemisphere. Moreover, the bulk of activities in all these spheres have primarily been implemented by migrants from South Asia, including entrepreneurs, professionals, technicians, artisans, and unskilled labor. Dubai has become a city that is primarily South Asian in demographic terms, such that Urdu—rather than Arabic or English—is its lingua franca; and like many of its predecessors, Dubai is a city in which the majority of its residents are denizens rather than citizens. The latter status is still overwhelmingly reserved for a tiny Arab minority, largely composed of members of the Arab tribal groups, particularly the Bani Yas, who were the Emirate's original residents.

It follows that while the city-state's social order is intensely plural in character, it is also one in which the al-Maktoums—and ultimately all Arab citizens—occupy a position of privileged rentiers vis-a-vis the massed ranks of the Sheikhdom's entrepreneurially and commercially oriented denizens. While it remains open to question as to how stable this structure will prove to

be in the end, any suggestion that it’s property bubble is at risk of collapse is, in my opinion, severely mistaken. All it serves to emphasize is that the al-Maktoums departure from their otherwise highly successful business model (by seeking to turn Dubai into a high-class tropical resort for Euro-American expatriates) has not been successful. Nevertheless, the citystate’s basic business model, based in the dynamics of globalization from below, continues to flourish. Moreover, Dubai is also busy building bridges with its oil-rich neighbor just down the coast. From this perspective the renaming of the Burj Dubai, the city-state’s most spectacular landmark, as the Burj Khalifa is a move of great symbolic significance. In doing so the Al-Maktoums have publicly acknowledged they are, and remain,junior brothers to the al-Nahyans. This is a sign that Dubai’s finances are underwritten for the foreseeable future against the security of Abu Dhabi’s oil reserves.

Nevertheless the Gulf continues to operate in its own terms. As the speculative investors in sukuk bonds (issued by Nakheel, the property development arm of Dubai World) have learned at great expense, they cannot expect to get their money back any time soon. These bonds are Islamic financial instruments issued on a risk-sharing basis: they are not contracts to pay up come what may. It follows that if the projects in which such funds were invested have temporarily gone pear-shaped, investors will have to wait until the market improves before they receive any kind of reward. As the worms begin systematically to turn, Euro-Americans can no longer expect, let alone insist, that the global economy should continue to operate solely in terms of their own Eurocentric rules.

[96] Before he turned to historical research, Menzies was the Captain of a nuclear submarine, which remained submerged for weeks. As a result, he had to navigate over long distances solely based on visual observations (including star sightings) through his periscope.

[97] In the course of their efforts to gain control of the regional sea-lanes, the Portuguese also built a fort to guard the entrance to Dubai Creek.

[98] The best analogy for the contrast I am drawing here is that between old-style mainframe computers and networked PCs. The former cannot operate without massive central registries in which all potentially relevant data is archived. The internet gives PC users access to an infinitude of data. But there is no central register in which it is all stored: it merely provides a list of addresses at which data may or may not be stored.

[99] It is also worth noting that all these transfers were ‘real’. The swaps brokered in Dubai all presumed instant execution, in sharp contrast to the speculative casino style Forex hedge markets in London and New York, where the vast majority of contracts are for forward execution.

[100] The full title of the Act is Uniting and Strengthening America by Providing Appropriate Tools Required to Intercept and Obstruct Terrorism

[101] Anti-Money Laundering and Countering the Finance of Terrorism.

[102] Know Your Customer

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** The Rise of Dubai: A Social History of the Commercial Cities in the Gulf

Aqil Kazim

This article traces the social and historical construction of Dubai as a globalized city. It situates this commercial center in the context of the social history of the Arabian Gulf. Today, Dubai links the Arabian Gulf, the rest of the Middle East, and the former Soviet republics with Africa, Europe, the Americas, and all of Asia through the movements of multinational corporations, technologies, laborers, financial transactions, goods and services, the media, tourists, entertainers, transit travelers, stock and bond investors, real estate investors, and homeowners. As such, Dubai plays an intermediary role in the postcolonial global system. It is important to examine postcolonial Dubai as a global city in relation to earlier cities. This article focuses on the rise of Dubai during the colonial and postcolonial global systems. The section on the colonial period analyzes the rise of Dubai in the context of British hegemony in the Arabian Gulf. The section on the postcolonial period examines Dubai as part of the independent UAE and in the context of the postcolonial global system. I argue that the history of Dubai illustrates the larger processes about the rise and decline of earlier cities in the region. The transformation of Dubai has been linked to

transformations taking place concurrently within global systems, diverse merchant and business classes, and regional and global marketplaces. Furthermore, I suggest that such an analysis may further assist us in understanding the rise of other contemporary cities not only in the Gulf region but also elsewhere in the world.

To understand the rise of Dubai as a global city in the twenty-first century, it is essential to analyze its growth and development historically and in relation to the rise and decline of cities in the Gulf. By global I mean the set of interconnections linking different parts of the world through movements of labor, commodities, and capital. Today, Dubai links the Arabian Gulf, the rest of the Middle East, and the former Soviet republics with Asia, Africa, and Europe, as well as the Americas, through movements of multinational corporations (MNCs), technologies, laborers, financial transactions, goods and services, the mass media, tourists, entertainers, transit travelers, stock and bond investors, real estate investors, homeowners, etc. Dubai plays an important intermediary role in the postcolonial global system, which consists of interconnections that were solidified following the departure of the traditional colonial powers and the formation of new nation states in the formerly colonially dominated regions. As discussions about the importance of Dubai in today's globalized world economy have increased, confusion about the role of this city has also grown.

This article is part of a larger study that situates Dubai in its regional and global historical contexts. First, there were the global systems that lasted until 600 AD. Second, there was the global system (600–1500 AD) associated with the rise and decline of the Muslim empires. I call this entire period the Islamic global system. It was followed by a transitional period (1500–1800) that turned into global colonial (1800–1971) and postcolonial (1971-present) systems. The focus of this article is mainly on the rise of Dubai during the last two systems. The colonial period was marked by the British domination of the Arabian Gulf (1820–1971) during which Dubai emerged as an important regional modern commercial center managed by a merchant class operating within the framework of colonial interests. Initially, these interests were centered on commerce. Later they shifted to oil. Beginning with the formation of the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and the emergence of MNCs, Dubai adapted itself to play a new role in this postcolonial system. This process of adaptation continued through the next few decades, which

witnessed the development of a post-industrial service economy operated by new MNCs. Meanwhile, China and India rose as powerful global economies, with profound implications for Dubai. The former Soviet republics were integrated into the capitalist system, providing new markets for Dubai. Concurrently, oil prices soared following the events of September 11, 2001 and the wars on Iraq and Afghanistan. All these events served the rise of Dubai. It has continued to flourish despite the latest financial crisis.

This article demonstrates that the rise and decline of cities in the Gulf are linked to transformations taking place concurrently within global systems, among diverse merchant and business classes, and in regional and global marketplaces.

*** The Colonial Period: 1820–1971

This period witnessed the extension of British control over the Gulf, the destruction of the existing commercial system, and the reconstruction of several cities aligned to serve the colonial interests. The UAE region came to be known as the Trucial Emirates during the period right after the destruction of the Al-Qawasim and the signing of the treaties with the British in 1820. The Al-Qawasim were an Arab mercantile grouping coexisting with a tribal confederation called the Beni Yas who lived in the area extending from the boundary of Qatar, southward to Dubai, and westward to Liwa, or the Bureimi Oasis. Both inhabited the UAE region during the 1700s. In particular, the Al-Qawasim established their commercial base by settling in the ports of Ras Al-Khaimah, Sharqah, Khor Fakkan, Dibba, Rams (near Ras al-Khaimah), Ajman, Fujairah, and Umm al-Qawain during the 1700s. They then extended their stronghold to Qishm, Qays, and Lingah, on the Persian littoral, after 1755. Subsequently, the Al-Qawasim gained control of Charak and Shinas on the Persian littoral of the Arabian Gulf, and of both sides of the entrance to the Arabian Gulf. By the early 1800s, the Al-Qawasim possessed a fleet of more than 500 vessels.[103]

Mercantile cities in the Gulf region had been destroyed by the time of the British treaties. In what became the Trucial Emirates, the British had destroyed most of the commercial ports and fleets of these emirates during

the war against the Al-Qawasim, and had leveled such key mercantile cities as Ras al-Khaimah and other Qasimi ports along both the Arabian and Persian littorals of the Arabian Gulf. The British seized some of these Persian littoral ports and used them as bases.[104]

As a result of the British-imposed containment of their economies under the treaties, the sheikhdoms of the Trucial Emirates also faced poverty. The increased impoverishment of the Trucial Emirates could be seen in the early 1900s, when the Al-Qawasim had only forty non-pearl, non-fishing vessels. All of the Trucial Emirates had only ninety non-pearl, non-fishing vessels at that time.[105] Population statistics also indicate the impoverishment experienced by the Trucial Emirates during the period of British colonialism. At the beginning of the nineteenth century, the aggregate population of the Qasimi areas of the Trucial Emirates was 390,000.[106] In the early twentieth century, in contrast, this population actually fell to 50,750.[107] Indeed, the entire population of the Trucial Emirates only amounted to 200,000 at that time.[108] Along with impoverishment and related emigration, economic displacement and mortality probably accounted for this drastic drop in population. British colonialism's containment of the economy of the Trucial Emirates, and particularly the destruction by the former of the latter's long-distance trade, especially trade with India, China, and the Far East, left the indigenous population of the Trucial Emirates with a fishing industry and agriculture that mainly met demand within the emirates and, to a limited extent, elsewhere in the Arabian Gulf.

It also left the Trucial Emirates with the pearl industry. After 1820, pearls had become the Trucial Emirates' most important export and main source of external revenue.[109] Since colonial penetration gave Britain control of the Trucial Emirates, the British were able, through the Banyan merchantfinanciers with whom they had developed a partnership, to reconstruct the economy of the Trucial Emirates as a single-commodity economy through the development of the pearl industry. The Banyan were a merchant class from India. They comprised a specific stratum within the British hegemonic structure that had been constructed in relation to the British East India Company's penetration of the Indian Ocean and the Arabian Gulf during the eighteenth century. Banyan merchants served as cross-cultural agents.[110] It was through the pearl industry that the British

linked the economy of the Trucial Emirates via Dubai to the global market, by generating in Europe a demand for Gulf pearls.

*** Dubai in the Early Colonial Period

Dubai is significant because it was an important mercantile city both in the Trucial Emirates and in the Arabian Gulf. Specifically, Dubai became important in the late 1800s and the early 1900s because the British brought goods there via steamer and also because it became the main pearl exporter in the UAE region after the decline of Lingah, on the Persian littoral, after 1902. Prior to the decline of Lingah, during the rule of Sheikh Hashar bin Maktoum (1859–1886), Dubai had become an important port where pearls of the UAE region were exported to Lingah by the local pearl merchants. Other local and non-local merchants imported rice, spices, and textiles to Dubai from Lingah for local consumption and for distribution within the UAE region. In this period, Dubai also witnessed the emergence of Indian merchant communities (Banyan and Khojah) who enjoyed a privileged status with the British as British subjects. During the nineteenth century, they frequently became partners of British entrepreneurs, establishing businesses such as moneylending and commercial agency houses. In Dubai, they sold textiles in this capacity, and, more importantly, served as moneylenders, providing the pearl industry with most of its credit.[111] Hence, in the late nineteenth century, Dubai had become an important port in the UAE region because of the boom in the pearl trade and because of Sheikh Hashar bin Maktoum’s liberal policy in relation to other sheikhdoms in the region.[112]

This section examines Dubai’s beginnings and its rise as a mercantile city in the context of transformations that were occurring in the Trucial Emirates in the early twentieth century.[113] The rise of Dubai as a mercantile city at the end of the nineteenth century needs to be understood in the context of the British installation of a regular steamer service in the Arabian Gulf after 1862, first as a mail service, and later as a cargo and passenger service. In 1862, the British East India Company (BI), a private company receiving subsidies from the British Government of India, won a contract from Bombay for providing mail service between Calcutta, Bombay, and Karachi in India, and Basra and other ports on the Arabian Gulf.[114] Mackinnon Mackenzie & Co., which had managed BI’s trade services along the Indian coast, took

responsibility for establishing Bl operations in the Arabian Gulf. In 1865, Mackinnon Mackenzie & Co. and Bl established the firm of Gray, Paul & Co. as their agency in Bushire and Bandar Abbas, then established their agency in Basra in 1869, and thereafter established an office in Lingah, a city in the Qasimi territory on the Persian littoral of the Gulf, in 1875.[115] This port served as a transshipment center for traffic to and from Bahrain and the UAE region and other ports in the Gulf region, as well as the Larristan, Tehran, and Yazd regions in Iran.[116] It is important to note that during this time, the Lingah merchant community consisted of diverse ethnic groups such as Arabs, Indians, Africans, Europeans, and Persians. Among these groups, the Arab merchants of Lingah and the Persian fiefs that enjoyed some autonomy from the weak central government in Iran during this period played an important intermediary role as business agents to international companies headquartered in Europe, India, and elsewhere. They were then the importers of goods from overseas through Bl and the re-exporters to the Arabian Gulf region and Iran.[117] Subsequently, in 1883, Bl through Gray, Paul & Co. established an office in Bahrain.[118] Bl through Gray, Paul & Co. began its operations in Dubai in 1891.[119]

To ensure that the Gulf ports of call for Bl ships could pay for the imports from Britain, Bl began to encourage most of the Gulf ports to develop their own specific cash commodities for export, mainly by providing the shipping forthem. In the case of Bushire, whose imports usually exceeded its exports in value between 1865 and the 1870s, the chosen cash commodity was opium, because of the ready market it commanded in Hong Kong, Singapore, and later in Britain and the United States.[120] The Bandar Abbas port, too, served as a significant export depot for Persia’s opium crop.[121] Basra was another significant importer of British goods; Basra’s date trade was also important to Gray, Paul & Co. for export to merchants in Europe, America, and Australia. For Bahrain, it was pearls after 1883; Gray, Paul & Co. shipped a large percentage of Bahrain’s pearl exports to India. Lingah’s initial importance for Gray, Paul & Co. lay in its function as a port of mail delivery. Subsequently, it also became a highly significant pearl exporter, as all of the pearls extracted from the pearl banks of the UAE region were exported to British India via this port.[122] The pearl trade began to decline after the end of the pearling season of 19011902 because of the effects of the stricter customs regulations imposed by the officials of the Qajar Shah after that year[123] (who had taken over Lingah from the al-Qawasim in 1887).[124] In 1902, the Qajar Shah officials governing Lingah reformed the customs laws

and ended the city’s free port status. Between 1887 and the beginning of the twentieth century, therefore, Lingah gradually lost its commerce to Dubai.[125]

After 1902, Dubai became a major port of call for steamers.[126] By 1904, steamers were calling at Dubai weekly. The Sheikh of Dubai, Maktoum bin Hashar (1894–1906), encouraged trade by abolishing the 5 percent customs duty previously effective in Dubai and by declaring Dubai a free port. He also sent a delegation of Dubai notables to Lingah to encourage the merchants there to move to Dubai. He himself visited Lingah and met with the merchants. At their request, he improved the Dubai port facilities (customs houses, warehouses, shops, etc.). The merchants of Lingah then started to migrate to Dubai. The decline of Lingah and the rise of Dubai went hand in hand. With the decline of Lingah, Dubai became a port from which goods coming from British India were re-exported to the Gulf region and to the interior of the Sultanate of Oman at this time[127] by the same merchants who had earlier played this role in Lingah.[128]

The merchants in particular, and the immigrants in general, were very diverse in terms of ethnicity, religion, and wealth. Some of the merchants came to be called the Bastakiyyah, after Bastak, a Persian littoral region near Lingah from which this particular group had migrated. Bastaki migrants from Lingah were very wealthy. One of them had merchandise worth Rs 18 million traded between India and Lingah, and another’s wealth was around Rs 10 million. The prosperity of these two merchants represents the reason why, by 1904, steamers were calling at Dubai weekly.[129] The merchants also imported clothes, food, and various consumer goods from British India to Dubai for local consumption and for re-export. These goods were delivered via Bl steamers. It is important to mention that the amount of money brought by the Arab, Persian, and Indian merchants from Lingah to Dubai was estimated at around Rs 73 million.[130] They were followed by diverse classes from different parts of the Arabian Gulf and the Indian Ocean regions.[131] This group included craftsmen, shopkeepers, clerks, and porters. Dubai shopkeepers were Arabs, Persians, and Indians; they sold basic food commodities, textiles, and household goods. Some of them were migrants from India who had traveled as deck passengers on the steamer lines during the first years of the twentieth century.[132] It was the Bl ships that transported most merchandise, whether from the United Kingdom or from

British India to Dubai. Dubai’s imports from British India via Gray, Paul & Co. consisted of rice, coffee, tea, spices, sugar, grain, and flour, as well as textiles, cotton piece goods, various consumer goods, and other manufactures.[133] Cloth imports from the UK had become so commonplace that by the end of the nineteenth century, the cotton cloth used to make the garments worn by rural people in the Trucial Emirates was often manufactured in Lancashire and brought to the Gulf by steamer.[134]

This section examines the process by which Dubai was constructed in the context of British colonialism and the rise ofthe ruling class and the intermediary merchant classes of Dubai. In this period, the Trucial Emirates came to produce and export via Dubai a single commodity, namely pearls. This analysis of the 1820–1945 period also demonstrates how British colonialism succeeded in the total destruction of Trucial Oman’s long-distance trade and in the remolding of the merchant classes to replace the long-distance mercantile stratum that had been so significant during the earlier periods. The new merchants included pearl merchants and importers of British manufactures and semimanufactures. Cities also rose and fell under British colonialism. The Qasimi cities of Ras al-Khaimah, Sharqah, Lingah, and others on the Persian littoral of the Arabian Gulf declined, while Dubai rose as a result of becoming a port of call for Bl steamers, an importer and re-exporter of British manufactures and semimanufactures, and an exporter of pearls. The colonial period (1945–1971) saw the transformation of Dubai in terms of the city’s ruling class and merchant classes and deepening colonial penetration.

*** Dubai in the Later Colonial Period

The pearl industry arid the pearl merchants in the Arabian Gulf declined in the late 1920s and the early 1930s because of the dominance ofthe global pearl market by the Japanese cultured pearl industry.[135] This overriding factor emerged in conjunction with two others, namely the Great Depression and the decreasing yields from the over-fished pearl banks of the Arabian Gulf.[136] However, Dubai already had another mercantile stratum whose

prosperity was based on the import and re-export of external goods. Hence, Dubai, after the decline of the pearl industry, continued as a commercial city in the Gulf region and was central to British interests in the UAE region. While most of Dubai's merchant classes remained interconnected as importers of British goods and of other commodities brought in by the British India shipping lines, these classes underwent substantial transformations after World War II following the growth of Dubai's government revenues, changes in Dubai's administrative system, the implementation of development projects in Dubai and elsewhere in the Gulf, and the influx of immigrant labor.

Beginning in 1957, Dubai entered a period of growth as a re-export center, facilitated by its economic and political administration, and it was constructed in relation to this growth. Sheikh Rashid bin Sa id Al Maktoum (1958–1990) began instituting developmental projects in Dubai before he actually assumed power in 1958 (the year of his father Sheikh Sa'id's death in Dubai, after ruling for more than forty years). However, Sheikh Sa id had given Sheikh Rashid considerable authority since 1939.[137] This was because of the reform movement, the clashes between himself and the reformers, and the aftermath of the reform movement.[138] At the end of the 1940s, Sheikh Sa'id and Sheikh Rashid were able to initiate several projects that enhanced Dubai's commercial importance in the Arabian Gulf, which it had earned as a redistribution center because of its merchant classes, as discussed previously. Sheikh Sa id and his son wanted to facilitate the continued growth of Dubai as a center for the merchant classes, who influenced his decisions in this direction. Specific administrative measures taken by Sheikh Sa'id and Sheikh Rashid included cooperating with the British in the establishment in 1947 of a branch of the British Bank of the Middle East in Dubai, the British postal authority in 1948, setting up Dubai as the seat of the Trucial Emirates Council in 1952, and Dubai's replacement of the Emirate of Sharqah as the seat of the British Political Agent in 1953. Other changes included the establishment and organization of the Dubai Municipal Council, the Police Force (in 1956), the court system, the Customs Service, the Dubai Lands Department, the Water Supply Department, the Postal Department, the Dubai State Telephone Company, and the Dubai Petroleum Company.[139]

The growth of Dubai’s banking sector occurred concurrently with its rising importance as a commercial center. The third major bank to be chartered in Dubai was the First National City Bank of New York. (This bank had obtained special permission from the US Treasury to deal in gold.) By 1970, just before independence, eighteen banking houses were represented in Dubai, three of which were British, two Pakistani, two Iranian, two American, one Jordanian, and three locally chartered.[140] During the earlier period, British colonial interests had mainly been focused on the prosperity of the pearl industry. During this period, British interests diversified to include Dubai as a center for British imports, as a banking center, and as a gold trading center. Dubai’s government played a role in accommodating both the import-oriented merchant classes and the diverse British colonial interests.

Just as Dubai’s government had expanded the sheikhdom’s administrative bureaucracy, so also did the government embark upon development projects. One of the most important projects of Sheikh Rashid’s administration was the improvement of the Dubai port, which began in 1961. For this project, Sheikh Rashid borrowed funds from Kuwait to pay the British contracting firm, Sir William Halcrow & Partners, to deepen the port by means of dredging and to build breakwaters, thus improving the port services.[141] The Dubai port underwent further improvements in 1965. Halcrow & Partners served as the consultant for this project,[142] and Lloyd’s Bank (UK) provided a loan for it. Other loans came from the British Bank of the Middle East in anticipation of the discovery of oil in the offshore Fateh field.[143] Halcrow & Partners also drew the plans for improvements along Dubai’s Creek. These improvements were related to the expansion of Dubai’s port and the reclamation of land along the Creek through the narrowing of the channel. Indeed, the sale of parcels of reclaimed land along the Creek was a source of some revenue for Sheikh Rashid’s administration.[144]

Another project was Dubai’s airport, whose first terminal building was completed in I960.[145] In 1968, Sheikh Rashid’s administration extended a contract to Costain Civil Engineering for building additions to Dubai’s international airport. Britain’s Lloyd’s Bank extended loans for the project, in conjunction with Standard Bank. This financing had the backing of the British

Export Credits Guarantee Department. Costain Civil Engineering won a second contract for Dubai's airport in November 1970, under which the firm was to construct a new runway and taxiway, in addition to undertaking other improvements. Lloyd's Bank and Morgan, Grenfell & Co. lent Dubai funds to cover the cost of this project, again under the guarantee of the British Export Credits Guarantee Department.[146] The development projects described above show the role played by the Dubai government in accommodating both the import-oriented merchant classes and the diverse British colonial interests by borrowing money against anticipated oil revenues, and using these revenues for implementing infrastructural development projects, most of whose contracts were awarded to British firms. These developments also enhanced the importance of Dubai as a commercial center, not only for the Trucial Emirates but also for the Arabian Gulf.

During the period 1945–1970, the composition of Dubai's population in terms of workers and merchants also changed. A growing number of foreign workers began to enter Dubai because the largely British companies to which the government had awarded the development contracts needed low-wage labor to implement these development projects. They obtained much of the required labor from among the large number of workers in India and Pakistan who were displaced from their jobs during the postcolonial period. Other immigrant workers came from Iran, Europe, and other Arab countries. By 1968, immigrant labor accounted for 50 percent of Dubai's population.[147] During this period, the local portion of Dubai's merchant stratum continued to include merchants of Arab and non-Arab origin. In addition to serving as agents for the import of various foreign goods, local merchants also served as land brokers. Dubai's mercantile stratum benefited from the influx of immigrant labor during the 1960s, because this influx increased the population of the city. This increase in the population of employed workers, in turn, increased the demand for retail goods, and consequently for wholesale goods. The influx of immigrant labor also engendered the growth of many foreign-run retail businesses aimed at serving the needs of the immigrant population. These included Indian and Pakistani-run restaurants, laundries, bakeries, barbershops, etc.

While Sheikh Rashid was implementing the various development projects mentioned above, Dubai's external trade was also growing. Dubai's import trade, which amounted to 3 million pounds sterling in 1958, rose to 81

million pounds sterling in 1969.[148] Dubai's leading source of imports was the UK between 1962 and 1965. The second source was Japan, which took the lead from the UK in 1966. Switzerland became a significant source of Dubai's imports after 1964, taking the lead from Japan in 1967,[149] mainly because of the upsurge in Dubai's import of Swiss watches.[150] Other, less significant suppliers of goods to Dubai included India, Pakistan, Holland, West Germany, the United States, and Italy.[151] After 1945, Dubai also became the center for the re-export of another commodity, gold, which the British, who had obtained it from southern Africa, transported the precious metal to Dubai by air.[152] Several British firms supplied the gold to Dubai. These included Sharps Pixley, Mocatta and Goldsmid, Samuel Montagu, and Bullion Exchange.[153] The intermediary through which the gold was channeled into Dubai was the British Bank of the Middle East's Dubai branch, which was opened in 1947. Once the gold arrived in Dubai, the bank would store it, for a service charge of twenty cents (US) perten-tolah bar.[154] In 1966, the gold that was channeled through Dubai from the UK and Switzerland amounted to 10 percent of the total gold mined by the non-socialist world.[155]

A brief discussion about the specifics of Dubai's imports reveals that Dubai, as a port within the Indian Ocean system, had now chiefly become a destination for European goods. This contrasted with the role of the older Arabian Gulf mercantile cities in the pre-1500 and transformational period, wherein they were first centers for the export of the region's own commodities, and later centers for the inter-exchange of Indian Ocean products within the Indian Ocean system, albeit through Portuguese, Dutch, and English commercial monopolies. Figures pertaining to Dubai's imports also show how important consumer goods from Europe had become between 1945 and 1971, and how relatively little Dubai imported from elsewhere in the Indian Ocean system.

*** Dubai in the Postcolonial Period: 1971–2010

The postcolonial period witnessed transformations in Dubai as part of the independent UAE government, which was established on December 2,1971 after the withdrawal of the British from the Arabian Gulf region. Dubai's commercial role in the postcolonial period also reveals how the characteristics of the colonial period ceased to exist. While Dubai's ongoing

role as the main commercial center for the Arabian Gulf is a continuation of its role in the late- nineteenth and early-twentieth-century colonial period, this very commercial role changed during the period 1971–1995, and then again during the period 1995–2010. Hence, the postcolonial period is divided into two periods. In the first period, Dubai continued to play its old intermediary role through its existing and new merchants as the main redistributors of goods in the Gulf region. Obviously, this role expanded in this period in relation to the increase in oil revenue in the region, the boom in infrastructural development, and the increase in consumption.

The section below focuses on the Jebel Ali port, examines the changes in Dubai in relation to postcolonial globalization and the role of MNCs, and looks briefly at trade and commercial development in postcolonial Dubai as part of the UAE.

*** Postcolonial Dubai, 1971–1995: Jebel Ali and Trade

The role of Dubai changed during this period in relation to the postcolonial global system, which began with the post-World War II development of MNCs and decolonization. Since the late 1960s, these MNCs have entrenched themselves as global entities and have diversified their investments. These developments have led to the emergence of a new global system, in which all parts of the world have become closely interconnected in time and space because of the rapid development of transportation and communication and information technology. In addition to generally interconnecting people and places around the world more closely, the technological developments in the postcolonial global system have facilitated the mobility of MNCs for maximization of profit and minimization of cost. To gain proximity to a market that they were eager to penetrate, MNCs in the Indian Ocean region took certain steps, such as the formation of joint ventures with local firms and the establishment of their presence in free zones.

The specific project chosen by decision makers in Dubai in relation to the development of MNCs was the building of the Jebel Ali Free Zone. A free zone is a parcel of land in an independent country, usually within the area of a seaport or airport, which is set aside for special trading purposes. In a free zone, companies from various nations may set up plants, storage depots, and offices without the imposition of restrictions by the host country. Companies may also import goods into the free zone, and export them from there without paying customs duty.[156]

Sheikh Rashid decided to construct the Jebel Ali port in 1972. It was inaugurated in 1979 as the largest man-made port in the world. It was inauguarted as the Jebel Ali Free Zone in 1985, becoming the first free zone to be built in the Gulf region. It remains the largest in terms of capacity, hosts the largest number of corporations, and handles the largest quantity of goods compared to other free zones in the region. Companies importing or exporting goods also had access both to nearby Port Rashid, which had 35 berths, dry docks, and another container terminal,[157] and to the Free Zone at Dubai International Airport. Making Jebel Ali port a free zone meant opening it as a special enclave that would function outside of the customs barriers of Dubai and the UAE. The Free Zone was designed to enable MNCs to take advantage of Dubai's ports, facilities, and location, while bypassing the 51 percent local investment allowance that was required of all international investors in the UAE.[158] Another advantage was that investment in the Jebel Ali Free Zone included freedom from restrictions on the recruitment of expatriate personnel (low-wage, non-unionized labor). Investors in the Jebel Ali Free Zone are also permitted to repatriate 100 per cent of capital and profits, and are free from corporate taxes for the first fifty years following the establishment of the venture. This exemption is renewable for a second fifty-year period after the expiration of the first.[159] By the middle of 1995, the number of companies that had established themselves in the Jebel Ali Free Zone had risen to 800, representing more than seventy-two countries. In 1995, the companies established at the Jebel Ali Free Zone included Daewoo International, Daewoo Electronics, Honda, Grundig, Hyundai, Nokia, Nissan, Murata Machinery, Mobil Corporation, Wrigley GMBH, Pioneer Electronic Corporation, Philips, and Johnson & Johnson.[160] The importance of the Jebel Ali Free Zone lies in the fact that it has developed as a distribution center for MNCs seeking to penetrate the Arabian Gulf, the rest of the Middle East, and the Central Asian market. The use of communication technology enables transnational firms headquartered

in Tokyo, Seoul, Singapore, New York, Mumbai, Frankfurt, Beijing, London, and Sidney to operate in Dubai's Jebel Ali Free Zone.

Free zones are a contemporary type of commercial enclave. The Islamic mercantile stratum had established commercial enclaves during the Islamic period (600–1500 AD) in Ceylon, Malabar, Canton, Java, Sumatra, Kliwa, Mombasa, Malindi, and elsewhere in the Indian Ocean commercial system. These enclaves were taken over or replaced by the Portuguese and the Dutch during the transformational period, and the entire enclave system was superseded by British "colonialism," which did not need commercial enclaves since it had conquered both land and sea throughout the Indian Ocean region. The postcolonial free zones, therefore, resemble the commercial enclaves of the Islamic period in that the MNCs operating within them are free both from the customs restrictions and from the other laws of the host country, just as the merchants of the Islamic period (600–1500 AD) before them had been. However, the postcolonial free zones in today's Dubai differ from their commercial predecessors of the Islamic period (600–1500 AD) in that it is transnational corporations from the outside that have been establishing themselves within these free zones, rather than merchants from the Arabian Gulf who are extending their commercial influence outward. Postcolonial free zones in Dubai also differ from the Portuguese factories of the transformational period (1500–1820) in that these factories had been established by the Portuguese Crown to collect profits for itself, so that only Portuguese vessels and those few other craft permitted by the Portuguese Viceroy could unload and reload goods at these factories-.

Dubai as part of the UAE trade prior to 1980 had seen a continuation of the trade established during the colonial period wherein most of its imports and exports came from—and went to—Western states and Japan. This pattern began to change after the 1980s. In 1983, the European countries (as a group) and the Asian countries (in the aggregate) accounted for approximately equal shares of the total monetary value of UAE imports. By 1991, however, the share of the Asian countries had markedly surpassed that of the European countries, at 46.8 percent of total monetary value, whereas the European countries accounted for a 33.1 percent share.[161] The Asian countries from which the UAE imported commodities worth more than one billion dirhams in 1991 included, in ranked order, Japan, China, India, South Korea, Taiwan, and Thailand. Other countries from which UAE

imports surpassed the billion-dirham mark included the United States and Australia.[162] Regarding re-exports, Dubai's 1987 share amounted to 74.45 percent of the monetary value of the UAE's total, in contrast with the average share of the other four emirates for that year, which amounted to 8.51 percent. Dubai's re-exports in 1993 amounted to 56.2 percent.[163] The analysis of trade shows how the UAE's trade patterns in the postcolonial period were a discontinuation from those of the colonial period. This demonstrates the extent to which the UAE has diversified its sources of imports, while also showing the importance of Dubai in the UAE's external trade. In the Free Zone section, it was demonstrated how the role of Dubai as a commercial city had changed in relation to the postcolonial global system. It was shown that the construction of the Jebel Ali Free Zone indicated that Dubai was changing to accommodate the postcolonial global system that was being developed by MNCs, and it was argued that the construction of the Free Zone in Dubai was accommodating the needs and demands of MNCs, which were penetrating the regional market by using communication, information, and transportation technologies.

*** Postcolonial Dubai, 1995–2010

In this period, Dubai has come to attract diverse multinational investors. It has also become a global investor itself. It has increased its intermediary role in relation to the integration of Russia and the former Soviet republics into a new capitalist global system, and the rise of India and China in particular and of East Asia in general. This section focuses briefly on, among other related issues, the extent to which these new changes are a recovery of the Indian Ocean commercial system ofthe pre-European period

On January 4, 1995, Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum was appointed the crown prince of Dubai. This effectively made him Dubai's chief operating officer and signaled the quickening of the changes that had occurred in this period.[164] The changes in this period were built on the infrastructure developed in the previous periods, but were also related to various social, economic, and political factors globally that benefited Dubai, such as the second Gulf War of 1990, the end of the Cold War, the decline of the Soviet Union, the integration of the former socialist states into the new global system after 1990, the end of apartheid in South Africa in 1991, the

rise of East Asia after 2001 when China joined the World Trade Organization, the destruction of the World Trade Center in New York City in 2001, the US invasion of Afghanistan in 2001 and of Iraq in 2003, and the steady rise in oil prices since 2004. All of these factors combined to establish a new turning point for Dubai. As in the past, Dubai was ready to take advantage of all these changes because of its diverse merchant and business communities, which were well connected to regional and global markets, and also because of the entrepreneurial and well-established MNCs operating in its free zones. Dubai received large numbers of new immigrant merchants, entrepreneurs, and businessmen from diverse sources, as well as all sorts of creative and talented people.[165] These newcomers included Chinese, Koreans, Russians, Central Asians, Eastern Europeans, Malaysians, Iraqis, as well as additional Indians, Pakistanis, Lebanese, Arabs from North Africa, Africans, and especially South Africans and Americans.[166]

The recent immigrants are playing the same intermediary role as the old immigrants, but connecting Dubai to a larger and more diverse market. For example, Dubai recently inaugurated the largest Chinese export depot to be opened outside China. This is the mile-long Dragon Mart export depot. It is run by Chinese traders themselves, and they import directly from their factories in different regions of China. The recent immigrants are also more diverse than the previous ones in terms of nationality, class, and religion.

The MNCs in this period have also increased tremendously in their numbers, nationalities, activities, and investments, because the number of free zones in Dubai rose from two in the previous period to more than fifteen in the current period. The new free zones are also very diverse in terms of the services they offer and their focus on specific business sectors for creating clusters. Nevertheless, they are very similar to the free zones in Jebel Ali and Dubai Airport in terms oftheir purpose and regulations. Examples of these new free zones are Dubai Internet City, Dubai Media City (DMC), Dubai Studio City, and Dubai Financial District, the latter including Dubai International Financial Center (DIFC), Dubai Financial Service, and Dubai Financial Exchange. Other free zones include Dubai Healthcare City (which offers facilities for medical education, life science research, and technology with respect to healthcare services), Dubai Humanitarian City, Dubai Sport City, Dubai Academic City, Dubailand (a theme park), Dubai Industrial City, and Dubai Aviation City. These free zones established by the Dubai government

provide the necessary infrastructure and environment for the MNCs and international enterprises to operate globally out of Dubai. They receive commercial benefits similar to those enjoyed by Jebel Ali Free Zone, such as 100 percent foreign ownership and fifty-year corporate and personal tax exemption. These free zones have attracted thousands of companies. More than 800 companies have been established at DMC, including CNN, Reuters, CNBC, BBC, and MSNBC. Among international institutions that have been awarded licenses at DIFC are Swiss Private Bank, Julius Baer, Standard Chartered Bank, Barclays Capital, KPMG, Swiss International Legal Consultants Limited, and Dermal.[167] Furthermore, the free zone model, which was first applied in Jebel Ali Port and then in the free zones mentioned above, has also been further developed, allowing 100 percent freehold ownership of land and businesses. This new land regulation has led to a construction boom in Dubai, as well as to an increase in the number of construction workers. This model was later used by the rest of the Arabian Gulf region. By October 2009, Dubai had completed 390 highrises, with another 321 under construction and 551 more planned.[168]

Dubai, through a combination of old and new merchant classes, old and new MNCs and enterprises, creative and talented classes, and a huge influx of low-wage service and other workers, has become one of the most globalized cities in the world because of its demographic diversity and global interconnections. Dubai’s population is estimated to be around 2 million. The city’s population by nationality shows how diverse the residents have become during this period. The local Emirati population is estimated to be less than 15 percent. Non-locals represent 200 different nationalities. It is estimated that around $15 to $20 billion is transferred yearly by nonlocals in the UAE to their respective countries as remittance: about 10 percent to Europe, 25 percent to the Arab world, 40 percent to Asia, and 25 percent to the rest of the world. Dubai also received 9 million tourists from around the world in 2009.[169] Dubai International Airport received 46 million international transit passengers in 2009. This makes it the fourth busiest airport in the world.[170] Dubai also ranks the highest in the Middle Fast and the eleventh in the world in terms of direct foreign investment. In turn, Dubai’s investment in the global market is estimated to be around $120 billion through government- and semi-government-owned companies, such as Dubai International Capital, Emaar, Jumeirah Group, Dubai Ports World, and Limitless. More recently, investors from Dubai are seeking to diversify. They are turning their sights eastward toward the emerging markets in Asia,

especially China and India, as well as Malaysia, Indonesia, and Vietnam, and now Russia and Africa, including African Arab states like Egypt, the Comoros islands, the Maghreb countries, and sub-Saharan Africa. To be sure, investors in Dubai have not turned away from the United States entirely.[171] However, the three main suppliers to Dubai in 2009 were, in ranking order, the Asian countries of China, India, and Japan.[172] Dubai's main re-export destinations were, in ranking order, India, Switzerland, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, and Pakistan.[173] In this period, Dubai continues, as in previous periods, to be a zero-tax trading center, generating most of its income from government-provided services, tariffs, and rent, rather than taxes. The service sector contribution to Dubai's GDP by 2007 was 74 percent, and the oil sector contribution declined from 55 percent in 1980 to 5 percent in 2007.[174] In 2007, Dubai's "strategic plan 2015" proposed concentrating on six key building blocks of the economy. All of them are service related: trade and storage, travel and tourism, financial and professional, transportation and logistics, and construction. The strategy, as laid out by Sheikh Rashid in the previous period, was for Dubai to become "a service center—not just for the region, but also for the entire world."[175] Although Dubai does not depend on oil, it has benefited from the rise in oil prices through the investments in Dubai made by the Gulf states in general, and by Abu Dhabi in particular. The Gulf region has also-contributed to Dubai's real estate boom and tourism industry, as well as to Dubai's re-exports.

According to Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum in his book, My Vision:

<quote>

Dubai was a station that connected the East and the West, but today it is the final station where the roads begin in the four directions. The countries of the middle of the world need an economic capital; we can play this role not only because we have excellent infrastructure, but also because we already are playing an important part of it, and we will continue improving until Dubai becomes the economic capital of the region.[176]

</quote>

The region that Sheikh Mohammed refers to includes the Middle East and Central Asia, as well as the Indian subcontinent, with a total population estimated to be more than 3 billion. Dubai already is the largest market for re-export, the biggest financial center, and the biggest center for information and technology in the Middle East. Dubai's success in diversifying its economy has created competition and encouraged the rise of more cities in the Arabian Gulf region, most of which copied the Dubai model, some of them directly.[177] Of these new cities, some are becoming very specialized in the services that they want to provide to the region, such as Bahrain's Financial Center, Abu Dhabi's Center for New Energy, Doha's Center for Media, and Iran's Kish Free Zone. Jeddah and Kuwait are also planning to become important trade centers in the region. Dubai is actually encouraging the rise of these new cities by providing them with necessary information, technical skills, and information, and also by making investments in these cities, such as King Abdullah Port in Jeddah, the Financial Center in Bahrain, and the construction of highrises in Qatar.

*** Conclusion

The significance of the Arabian Gulf stems from several factors. First, the location of the Arabian Gulf is crucial; it has occupied.an important place in the major trade zones of the world throughout history. Second, it possesses globally and regionally integrated merchant classes and policy makers with an entrepreneurial, long-term vision and with the ability to move swiftly to seize opportunities.

So far I have argued that the rise of Dubai and other cities in the Arabian Gulf in the postcolonial global system is rooted in the history of the region. Commercial cities in this region have roots in the global systems preceding the rise of the Islamic empires. Further, the Gulf Islamic commercial cities of Siraf, Qais, Hormuz, Suhar, and Julfar rose and declined between 600 and 1500 AD in relation to the rise and decline of Baghdad and Cairo. It was the intermediary role of the merchants of the Gulf region—who connected the Indian subcontinent, China, and the Far East to the Arab Islamic world and

Europe—that led to the emergence of these commercial cities and other towns and enclaves in the Indian Ocean region. These merchants resisted the Portuguese, Dutch, and British domination of the Indian Ocean region. Dubai and other commercial cities in the Gulf emerged in the Indian Ocean region during the colonial period. In the early colonial period, Dubai continued as an important commercial city in the Gulf region because of its multicultural and well-connected merchants who played an intermediary role as re-exporters of goods and services. In the later colonial period, Dubai's role was enhanced when more merchants made the city their home. Dubai's infrastructure was expanded and improved tremendously to serve a thriving national oilbased economy. In the early postcolonial period, Dubai became a major hub for ever-proliferating MNCs. It developed the Jebel Ali Free Zone to serve investors seeking regional markets. Its role later expanded as a result of the diversification of MNCs, a second oil boom, the expansion of the regional market, the rise of India and China, and the integration of Russia and the former Soviet republics into the new capitalist global system. T° accommodate these changes, Dubai diversified its free zones and expanded its services globally. Despite the recent global economic crisis and its impact on Dubai's debt, the city will continue to remain the region's global service center because of its merchants and MNCs. Furthermore, Dubai's role will increase both as an intermediary and as a global investor. Dubai's intermediary role is linked to the return of the Indian Ocean as a significant commercial center, the increase in the Gulf region's surplus oil money, and the integration of Central Asia into the Indian Ocean commercial system. Nevertheless, these changes are happening in the context of a new global system that is, by and large, dependent on MNCs. In addition to Dubai, other significant cities will emerge in the region because of the expansion of the region's wealth, consumption, production, and markets. The Arabian Gulf location remains an important factor in the rise of commercial cities, but locations without socioeconomic factors, such as global merchant classes, global corporations, global surplus labor, and global markets, turn into insignificant spaces if they lack the creative human role played by the entrepreneurial classes and groups who have been living and working in the region.

[103] Sultan Mohammed al-Qasimi, The Myih of Arab Piracy in the Gulf (London: Croom Helm, 1386), 26–27.

[104] Ibid., 224–25.

[105] John Gordon Lorimer, Gazetteer of the Persian Gulf Oman, and Central Arabia, vol. 2, Geographical and Statistical (Calcutta: Superintendent Government Printing, 1915), 1440.

[106] p Klikovisky and F. Lotiskiyavitch, Al-lmarat al- ‘Arabiyyah al-Mutahidah (The United Arab Emirates), trans. Hassan Ishaq (Damascus: Dar Maisel, 1979), 18.

[107] Lorimer, Gazetteer of the Persian Gulf, Oman, and Central Arabia, vol. 2, 1437.

[108] Mana Saeed Al-Otaiba, Petroleum and the Economy of the United Arab Emirates (London: Croom Helm, 1977), 6.

[109] Donald Hawley, The Trucial States (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1971), 195–96.

[110] Philip D. Curtin, Cross-cultural Trade in World History, 3rd reprint. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), 175 and 249.

[111] Muhammad Morsy Abdullah, The United Arab Emirates. A Modern History (London: Croom Helm, 1978), 105.

[112] Al-Faris, “Alawtha’ al Iqtasadiyah fi Imarat al Sa’I, 1862–1965,” 45; Hussain, “Tejarat Dubai bina Mustahil al qaran al Ashreen wa Muntasafeh,” 149.

[113] The explorer Balbi (1680) referred to Dubai as a place famous for its pearls. Archeological explorations in the Jumeirah coastal area in Dubai have indicated that Dubai was the scene o^f significant economic activity during the Umayyad (661–750) and the early Abbasid (7501517) periods. Hasan Al Naboodah, “Emirati Place Names and Locations in Early Arabic Sources,” in New Perspectives on Recording UAE History (Abu Dhabi: National Center for Documentation and Research, 2009), 137. Abdul Ghafar Hussain, “Tejarat Dubai bina Mustahil al qaran al Ashreen wa Muntasafeh.” (Dubai Trade between 1900 and 1950), in /1 Muhathrat al Torathiah (Dubai Municipality, 2007), 148.

[114] Stephanie Jones, “The Management of British India Steamers in the Gulf, 1862–1945: Gray Mackenzie and the Mesopotamia Persian Corporation,” in The Gulf in the Early 20th Century: Foreign Institutions and Local Responses, ed. Richard I. Lawless (Durham, England: Centre for Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies, University of Durham, 1986), 25–26.

[115] Ibid., 26.

[116] Hussain, “Tejarat Dubai bina Mustahil al qaran al Ashreen wa Muntasafeh,” 149.

[117] Ibid., 149. See also Mohammed Al-Fahim, From Rags to Riches: A Story of Abu Dhabi ([!] ondon: London Centre of Arab Studies, 1995), 31–32; and Mohammed Al-Faris, Alawtha’ al iqtasadiyah fi Imarat al Sa’I, 1862–1965 (The Economic Conditions in Coastal Emirates, 1862–1965), (Abu Dhabi: Emirates Center for Strategic Studies, 2000), 43–45.

[118] Jones, “The Management of British India Steamers in the Gulf,” 29–30, 40, 43, and 44.

[119] Frauke Heard-Bey, From Trucial States to United Arab Emirates (London: Longman, 1982), 249.

[120] Jones, in Lawless, The Gulf in the Early 20th Century, 36 and 38.

[121] Ibid., 42–43.

[122] Ibid., 41–42 and 46–47.

[123] The Qajar dynasty came to power in Iran in 1794 and ruled until 1924. Customs were reformed because the Qajar Shah, Mozaffar al-Din, needed more revenue and cash to go to Europe for a cure. The Belgian customs adviser, M. Naus, who had been employed bv the Shah, revised the tariff so that more revenue could be produced. Yahya Armajani, Middle East: Past and Present (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1970), 220–228.

[124] Molly Izzard, The Gulf: Arabia’s Western Approaches (London: John Murray, 1979), 242.

[125] Rosemary Said Zahlan, The Making of the Modern Gulf States (London: Unwin Hyman, 1989), 95; Heard-Bey, From Trucial States to United Arab Emirates, 244.

[126] Lorimer, Gazetteer of the Persian Gulf, Oman, and Central Arabia, vol. 1, 774.

[127] Muhammad Morsy Abdullah, “Changes in the Economy and Political Attitudes and the Development of Culture on the Coast of Oman between 1900 and 1940,” Arabian Studies 2 (1975), 168. It is important to emphasize here that between 1860 and the turn of the twentieth century, what became the Sultanate of Oman declined steadily. Oman’s longdistance trade, of course, had long since been destroyed. But even local trans-Gulf commerce had been choked off by the advent of steamer commerce during the second half of the nineteenth century. Robert Geran. Landen, Oman since 1856: Disruptive Modernization in a Traditional Arab Society (Princeton: Princeton University Press) 1967,156–57.

[128] Hussain, “Tejarat Dubai bina Mustahil al qaran al Ashreen wa Muntasafeh,” 151. H*ard-Bey, From Trucial States to United Arab Emirates, 244; and Abdullah, “Changes in the Economy and Political Attitudes and the Development of Culture on the Coast of Oman Between 1900 and 1940,” 168.

[129] Hussain, “Tejarat Dubai bina Mustahil al qaran al Ashreen wa Muntasafeh,” 151.

[130] Ibid., 151.

[131] Abdallah Abd al-Rahman, The Emirates in the Memories of Its Children: Economic Life, Dubai: Al-Qara’at lil-Jami’ III Nashar wa al-Tawziya’, 1990, 326.

[132] Izzard, The Gulf, 242–44.

[133] Ibid., 242. Lorimer, Gazetteer of the Persian Gulf, Oman and Central Arabia, vol. 2, 1440.

[134] Landen, Oman since 1856, 80.

[135] Hawley, The Trucial States, 197.

[136] Heard-Bey, From Trucial States to United Arab Emirates, 220.

[137] Ahmad Khalil Attawi, Dawlat al-Imarat al-‘Arabiyyah al-Mutahidah: Nasha’tuha wa Tatawuruha. (The United Arab Emirates: Its Establishment and Development). Beirut: Al- Mu’asasat al-Jama’iyyah lil-Dirasat wa al-Nashr wa al-Tawziya’, 1981, 50.

[138] Zahlan, The Making of the Modern Gulf States, 96. Rosemarie Said Zahlan, “The 1938 Reform Movement in Dubai,” Al-Abhath IT, 1–4 (December 1970), 248 and 250.

[139] Abdullah, The United Arab Emirates, 136. See also Dubai Mujaz Wa Tarikh-Waqa’ Wa A Adath (2600 BC-2006) (Dubai Summary) (Dubai Municipality, 2009).

[140] K. G. Fenelon, The United Arab Emirates: An Economic and Social Survey (London: Lon man, 1976), 84–85.

[141] Michael Tomkinson, The United Arab Emirates: An Insight and a Guide (London: Jarrold and Sons, 1975), 132.

[142] MEED (August 24, 1967), 588.

[143] MEED (May 14, 1965), 226; (July 6, 1967), 465; and (October 26, 1967), 706.

[144] Hawley The Trucial States, 244, and Heard-Bey, From Trucial States to United Arab Emirates, 261–62.

[145] ibid., 244–45.

[146] MEED (December 20,1968), 1316; (May 19,1969), 697; and (November 20,1970), 1354.

[147] Yusuf Abu al-Hajaj, Dawlatal-lmaratal-‘Arabiyyahal-Mutahidah: DirasahMasshiyahShamilah. (The United Arab Emirates: A Complete Survey Study). (Cairo: Arab League, 1978), 262.

[148] Fenelon, The United Arab Emirates, 65.

[149] Hawley, The Trucial States, 363.

[150] Fenelon, The United Arab Emirates, 67.

[151] Hawley, The Trucial States, 364.

[152] Mohammed Mutawali, Hawdh al-Khalij al-‘Arabi: Al-Awdha’ al-Siyasiyyah wa al- Iqtisadiyyah. (The Arabian Gulf: Political and Economic Conditions), vol. 2 (Cairo: Anglo- Egyptian, 1981), 525–30.

[153] si Ibid., 205.

[154] Mutawali, Hawdh al-Khalij al-‘Arabi, 525–30.

[155] Ragaei El-Mallakh, The Economic Development of the United Arab Emirates (New York: St Martin’s Press, 1981), 21.

[156] Central Bank ofthe United Arab Emirates, “Memorandum,” October 1989, Abu Dhabi, UAE, 5.

[157] Sultat al-Mantaqat al-Hurrah li Jebel Ali, Dubai (Authority of the Free Zone at Jebel Ali, Dubai), Dalil al-Mustathmar (Guide for Investors) (Dubai, UAE: Sultat al-Mantaqat al- Hurrah li Jebel Ali, Dubai, April 1993), 4.

[158] Journal ofthe Emirates Industrial Bank 4, 9 (September 1989), 205.

[159] Sultat al-Mantaqat al-Hurrah li Jebel Ali, Dubai, Dalil al-Mustathmar, 2.

[160] “Jebel Ali Free Zone,” Dubai Industry Bulletin 1, 1 (August 1995), 19.

[161] International Monetary Fund, Direction of Trade Statistics Yearbook, 1977,1982,1987, and 1993.

[162] United Arab Emirates Ministry of Planning, Annual Statistical Abstract: Thirteenth Edition, 1982–1987, 242; and 1992, 252–262.

[163] Dubai Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Research and Studies Department, UAE (Non-Oil) Foreign Trade Statistics for the Years 1987–1991, and United Arab Emirates (NonOil) Foreign Trade Statistics for the Years 1989–1993.

[164] Edmund O’Sullivan, The New Gulf (Dubai: Motivate Publishing, 2008), 280. Sheikh Mohammed’s first major project was supervising the construction of the Dubai dry docks. In 1977, he headed a committee to upgrade Dubai airport. In 1985, he established the Emirates Airline and took control ofthe Jebel Ali Free Zone.

[165] Richard L. Florida, The Flight ofthe Creative Class (New York: HarperBusiness, 2005), 159–71. According to a study by Lisa Benton-Short, Dubai tops the list of world cities (at a wf opping 82 percent) that are open to global talent.

[166] Ben Simpfendorfer, The New Silk Road (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), 101.

[167] The Report: Dubai 2008 (Oxford Business Group); Graeme Wilson, Rashid’s Legacy (London: Media Prima, 2006), 574–91.

[168] “Dubai Raises Game,” Gulf Property 2, 1 (October 2009), 10.

[169] Al-bayan, no. 10546 (May 3, 2009), 5. The Report: Dubai 2008, 140 and 11.

[170] Al bayan no. 10843 (February 24 2010) 5

[171] Al-Idari, 6,35 (June 2009), 58–59. Al-bayan, no. 10167 (April 19, 2008), 6. The Report, 39-AO.

[172] Al-bayan, no. 10827 (February 8, 2010), 3. The Report, 11.

[173] Al-Bayan, no. 10843 (February 24, 2010), 4.

[174] “Dubai’s Mohammed bin Rashid,” Ai-lktissad Wal-Aamal (Arab business magazine), 328, year 29 (April 27, 2007), 56–58.

[175] The Report, 35.

[176] [Footnote missing from the print book.]

[177] The Report, 35. Andrew Lee Butters, “The Lessons of Dubai,” Time, 175, 7 (February 22, 2010), 37–39.

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Development). Beirut: Al-Mu’asasat al-Jama’iyyah Iil-Dirasat wa al-Nashr wa al-Tawziya’, 1981.

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** Abu Dhabi’s Global Economy: Integration and Innovation

Christopher Davidson

At the helm of the United Arab Emirates federation, Abu Dhabi powered into the twenty-first century on the back of everincreasing oil revenues, well-established petrochemical industries, and massive oil-financed overseas investments. For the foreseeable future and despite worsening global conditions, these sectors and strategies will remain the central pillars of the

emirate’s economy; Abu Dhabi will continue to be a major oil producer and to control the world’s greatest sovereign wealth funds. And since 2004, its dynamic new leadership has also begun to diversify the economy. By nhaximizing Abu Dhabi’s competitive advantages and reaching out to the most capable foreign partners, a plethora of new sectors have been launched. These include high-technology heavy industries, a pioneering renewable-energy sector, extensive realestate projects, and up-market “cultural tourism.” Having been carefully selected and nurtured, these sectors will be responsible within a few years for a potent and vibrant new economy providing plentiful employment and domestic investment opportunities. Unlike the more urgent and seemingly problematic diversification that has taken place in Dubai and elsewhere in the Gulf, Abu Dhabi’s astutely managed economic development should allow the emirate to carve out a high-profile and sustainable niche, even during this time of global financial crisis.

With ever-increasing oil revenues, competitive petrochemical industries, and the world’s largest sovereign wealth funds, Abu Dhabi powered into the twenty-first century as one of the most prosperous and stable countries of the developing world. Although these three hydrocarbondependent activities have since been hit hard in the aftermath of the global credit crunch, they nonetheless remain the central economic pillars of the wealthiest member of the federation of the United Arab Emirates (UAE). Certainly, Abu Dhabi is likely to remain among the world’s leading oil producers and its sovereign wealth funds are likely to continue to grow in size and influence, possibly recovering from any recent losses. Moreover, with a dynamic new leadership in place since 2004, the emirate has also begun to diversify its economy

rapidly. By maximizing its comparative advantages and by reaching out to the most capable foreign partners, a plethora of new sectors have been launched. These include high-technology heavy industries, a pioneering renewable energy sector, extensive real estate projects, and upmarket “cultural tourism.” These sectors, having been carefully selected and nurtured, should be responsible, within a few more years, for a potent and vibrant new economy providing plentiful employment and domestic investment opportunities. Unlike the more urgent and seemingly problematic diversification that has taken place elsewhere in the Gulf, most notably in Dubai—Abu Dhabi’s ubiquitous UAE neighbor—the nature of the emirate’s seemingly better managed economic developments should allow it to carve out a high-profile and sustainable niche for itself, even during a period of prolonged global recession.

*** The Hydrocarbon Economy

With several major discoveries since the 1970s, both onshore and offshore, Abu Dhabi’s share of global oil reserves has continued to grow and now stands at about 8 percent, some 98 billion barrels, which represents about 94 percent of the UAE’ total.[178] Production currently stands at 2.7 million barrels, but the Supreme Petroleum Council has recently invested over $20 bi’lion in oil infrastructure with a view to expanding Abu Dhabi’s output capacity by 30 percent to nearly 3.5 million barrels per day by the end of 2010. Almost all of this excess production will be sold to China and other Pacific Asian buyers.[179] Even at this higher rate—and assuming no further discoveries are made—it is estimated that Abu Dhabi’s reserves will still last another ninety years.[180]

The early days of one or two major concession holders are now long gone, and several foreign companies currently hold stakes in Abu Dhabi’s oil industry, with the emirate having opted not to follow the path of other Gulf states such as Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, which nationalized their oil industries. At present, Abu Dhabi’s concession holders include British Petroleum (BP), the inheritor of the old Iraqi Petroleum Company’s Abu Dhabi interests, along with Compagnie Frangaise des Petroles, Royal Dutch Shell, Exxon-Mobil, Total, and the Japan Oil Development Company (JODCO). Most of the foreign companies keep having their stakes renewed, with some

already having been extended up until 2026.[181] It is believed that their expertise and technological input continue to be welcomed and have served the emirate well. In addition, it is thought that the presence of such multinationals in Abu Dhabi has enhanced the emirate's security environment, as foreign assistance in the event of an invasion or attack is more likely if companies headquartered in various superpowers have a direct and vested interest in Abu Dhabi's stability. Nevertheless, since 1971, a "national" oil company, the Abu Dhabi National Oil Company (ADNOC), has always held the controlling stake in the various concessions. ADNOC holds a 60 percent stake in the largest onshore concession, the Abu Dhabi Company for Onshore Oil Investments (ADCO); a 60 percent stake in the largest offshore concession, the Abu Dhabi Marine Areas company; and a 51 percent stake in the Zakum Development Company (ZADCO), another major offshore concession holder.[182] In any case, although exact figures are unavailable, there are handsome profits for all concerned, with Abu Dhabi's total oil exports in 2007 estimated to have been worth over $65 billion,[183] a figure likely to have risen to nearly $90 billion during the oil price hikes of 2008.[184] Even in 2009, with prices having averaged little more than $50 a barrel, it is thought that oil export revenues were still in excess of $45 billion.

Although incomparable to gas reserves elsewhere in the Gulf, especially those of Qatar, Abu Dhabi nevertheless controls 3.4 percent of the world's natural gas, some 200 trillion cubic feet.[185] Much like the oil industry, the major offshore concession holder, Abu Dhabi Gas Liquefaction Company (ADGAS), is majority owned by ADNOC, which holds a 70 percent stake, while the remainder is divided between BP, Total, and Mitsubishi Gas.[186] Similarly, the major onshore concession holder, Abu Dhabi Gas Industries (GASCO), is majority owned by ADNOC, which holds a 68 percent stake, while the remainder is divided between Total, Royal Dutch Shell, and Partex.[187] In the near future, a new concession to be shared by ADNOC and ConocoPhillips will exploit untouched areas of the Shah and Bab onshore gas fields.[188] Although controversial, given the reportedly high sulfur and carbon dioxide content of Shah's gas,[189] this will boost Abu Dhabi's current gas production of about 4.5 billion cubic feet per day[190] to nearly 6 billion cubic feet per day. And by the end of 2010, GASCO will have completed the final phase of the Habshan Gas Complex, one of the world's largest gas plants.[191] Despite these increases, Abu Dhabi will still face gas shortages, as some 85 percent of the emirate's power plants are gas fuelled.[192] These shortages have already stalled major development projects,

including the construction of an Abu Dhabi-financed desalination plant in the poorer emirate of Umm al-Qawain,[193] and it seems that construction projects in the capital itself have been slowed down because of this. Hopes for a solution had been pinned on the massive Dolphin gas project, which had established Qatar as a co-supplier and had committed Abu Dhabi to the large-scale transportation and marketing of Dolphin gas to Dubai, Oman, and other net gas importers in the region.[194] However, despite two billion cubic feet per day of Dolphin gas now being piped in from Qatar,[195] the problem has not yet been solved.

The long-term plan is the development of a number of nuclear power plants in the emirate, and, as discussed later in this article, an agreement was finalized in late 2009 with a South Korean consortium to construct four such plants by 2030.[196] In the meantime, it is also possible that Abu Dhabi will seek access to gas from much farther afield, with some of the emirate's companies having already acquired concessions to exploit gas fields in other countries. In this scenario, Abu Dhabi will export its hydrocarbon expertise, satisfy its own energy needs, and perhaps even re-export non-Gulf gas to its more resource-scarce neighbors. However, at present it still appears that these acquisitions are on a primarily commercial basis. Notably, following closely in the footsteps of an Omani deal to exploit Iranian gas fields,[197] Abu Dhabi's Mubadala Development Corporation has acquired the Singaporebased Pearl Energy, which in turn holds concessions to exploit Indonesia's Sebuku gas field and the Jasmine gas field in the Gulf of Thailand. And through its Liwa Energy subsidiary company, Mubadala has also bought into hydrocarbon exploration companies in Algeria and Libya.[198] Similarly, other Abu Dhabi entities have bought into overseas explorations, including the Abu Dhabi National Energy Company (referred to as "Taqa"),[199] which now has a stake in North Sea and Canadian operations,[200] and the International Petroleum Investment Company (IPIC), which has developed an interest in Kazakhstani gas discoveries.[201]

*** Oil-Related Industrialization

In addition to some basic agricultural developments and small-scale import-substitution industries, most of which concentrated on producing basic construction materials, since the first oil boom, Abu Dhabi has also

established heavy state-owned export-oriented industries. Most of these have concentrated on the production of metals, plastics, fertilizers, and petrochemicals. These all require abundant energy to manufacture and therefore best capitalize on Abu Dhabi's competitive advantages. After all, even though there may be looming gas shortages, there is plentiful oil. The most prominent of these downstream industrial companies are Fertil (established in 1980 and co-owned by the Abu Dhabi National Oil Company and Total),[202] the Abu Dhabi Polymers Company or Borouge (established in 1998),[203] and Emirates Aluminium (EMAL); the latter operates the world's largest aluminum-processing facility on Abu Dhabi's man-made Taweelah Island. Most of these exports are believed to be destined for India, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, and Malaysia.[204]

As with the hydrocarbon industry, over the next few years, the sector will continue to expand—gas shortages notwithstanding—with both the Mubadala Development Corporation and the Abu Dhabi Basic Industries Corporation (ADBIC) planning to build massive new aluminum plants.[205] By 2013, the IPIC will have built a new Chemicals Industrial City; capable of producing 7 million tons per year of aromatics and ammonia derivatives, it will be the world's largest such complex.[206] In addition, ADBIC is planning to invest a further $4 billion in its Abu Dhabi Polymers Park; by 2011, it is expected that this will have led to a doubling of the emirate's polymers production.[207] Other projects will include those belonging to the new Emirates Iron Company, the Emirates Cement Factory, and the Al-Nasser Industrial Enterprises parastatal.[208] The government has throw its full weight behind these developments, having increased spending on industrial infrastructure by over 400 percent since 2001.[209] Soon it promises the completion of the $10 billion Khalifa Port and Industrial Zone on Taweelah and has committed a further $8 billion for other sectorspecific infrastructure projects.[210] A new unit, ZonesCorp, has been set up to administer these new districts, to provide organizational support, and to build residential camps for laborers.[211]

*** Overseas Investments and Sovereign Wealth

Of equal, if not greater, importance to Abu Dhabi's economy since the 1970s has been the channeling of surplus oil revenues into long-term overseas

investments, rather than simply short-term paper. Conceived as a means of buffering the domestic economy should the international oil industry falter, most of these investments have been made through a handful of government-owned authorities or government-backed companies. Indeed, of the latter, most simply state that their sole shareholder is “the Government of Abu Dhabi.” Today, their combined assets are thought to be in excess of $1 trillion, and up until last year they were generating some 6–7 percent in annualized returns.[212] This compares very favorably with the world’s other sovereign wealth-managing countries, notably Singapore and Norway, with $490 billion[213] and $390 billion[214] respectively, and places Abu Dhabi far ahead of other Gulf investors such as Kuwait with $260 billion[215] and Qatar with a modest $60 billion.[216]

By far the most prominent of Abu Dhabi’s sovereign wealth funds is the Abu Dhabi Investments Authority (ADIA), founded in 1976. It reached about $100 billion in overseas assets by the mid-1990s[217] and about $360 billion by 2005.[218] Now symbolically housed in the tallest building in Abu Dhabi, the Samsung-ADIA complex,[219] it was estimated that ADIA had reached nearly $630 billion in early 2008.[220] Although this figure has certainly dropped with the worsening of the global recession,[221] it is likely that ADIA is still the world’s largest sovereign wealth fund. Following Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al-Nahyan’s succession as ruler in late 2004, ADIA’s chairmanship formally passed from Khalifa to a younger half brother, Sheikh Ahmad bin Zayed Al-Nahyan, until his death in 2010. AIDA houses teams of foreign experts that scour the globe for a variety of opportunities. It is thought that the company has historically favored index-linked blue-chip investments in the developed world. These fairly conservative investments are believed to still make up the bulk of ADIA’s portfolio, a recent example being the acquisition of a 5 percent stake in Citigroup. This $7.5 billion investment in 2007 made ADIA the largest shareholder in the largest US bank, and came just months after it had taken a 9 percent stake in Apollo, a leading US management firm. Moreover, as part of the same strategy, ADIA has long been building up considerable investments in mature Western real estate, with its UK portfolio alone being valued in excess of $6 billion.[222] About 40–50 percent of the portfolio is in North American markets, with 25–30 percent in Europe, 10–15 percent in developed Asia, and 10–15 percent in emerging markets.[223] Recent examples of investments in the latter category include ADIA’s acquisition of an 8 percent stake in the Egyptian Financial Group Hermes Holding Company (EFG-Hermes) and a large stake in the giant Prince Abdul-

Aziz bin Musaid Economic City in Saudi Arabia.[224] Of the remainder of ADIA's portfolio, little information is available, although it would seem that most of it falls under the control of ADIA's new strategic investments department, which is headed by the same astute manager as the emerging markets division.[225] Examples of ADIA's strategic "wild card" investments may include a reported $5 billion investment in Libya's tourism infrastructure.[226]

Also prominent among the emirate's sovereign wealth funds is the Abu Dhabi Investment Company (ADIC). Established in 1977, it is the second oldest and second largest such fund in Abu Dhabi, believed to be in control of over $15 billion in overseas investments.[227] Historically, it has been under the control of the Suwdan section of the Bani Yas tribe,[228] and today this remains the case, with Khalifa bin Muhammad Al-Kindi and Nasser bin Ahmad Al-Suwaidi serving, respectively, as its chairman and deputy chairman. ADIC specializes in North African investments,[229] but in the last few years it has begun to diversify its interests and has, much like ADIA, seen value in depressed Western real estate.

Abu Dhabi's third sovereign wealth fund is managed by the IPIC. Originally founded in 1984 as an expertise-combining joint venture between ADIA and the Abu Dhabi National Oil Company, it remains co-owned by the two entities, but now falls under the umbrella of the Supreme Petroleum Council. Nevertheless, it has an independent board of directors,[230] now chaired by Sheikh Mansur bin Zayed Al-Nahyan, which has successfully built up I PIC's overseas oil-related investment portfolio to nearly $14 billion. Some of its biggest investments include a 17 percent stake in Osterreichischen Mineralblverwaltung Aktiengesellschaft (OMV), a major Austrian petrochemicals company,[231] and a 65 percent controlling stake in Borealis, [232] a plastics company also based in Austria that has links with the Abu Dhabi Polymers Company. More recently, IPIC has invested in Japan's oil refining industry by purchasing a 21 percent, $780 million stake in the Cosmo Oil Company.[233] In addition to its above-mentioned interests in Kazakhstani explorations, in 2008 IPIC announced plans to invest $5 billion in a petrochemicals plant in the Central Asian country.[234] It is estimated that over the next five years, IPIC will have increased its portfolio of investments to $40 billion.[235]

Capturing many more headlines than either ADIC or IPIC is Abu Dhabi's fourth largest but probably fastest growing sovereign wealth manager. Founded in 2002 by the soon-to-be-crown prince, Sheikh Muhammad bin Zayed Al-Nahyan, the Mubadala Development Corporation is staffed by members of the same team involved in the early stages of the Dolphin gas project. Many of these individuals were handpicked for the purpose by Muhammad, most notably Mubadala's esteemed managing director, Khaldun bin Khalifa Al-Mubarak, and its CEO, Waleed bin Ahmad Al-Mokarrab Al-Muhairi, ofthe Al-Bu Mahair section ofthe Bani Yas. Although Mubadala still serves as Dolphin's majority shareholder,[236] and, as evidenced by the above-mentioned Pearl Energy acquisition, although it clearly maintains an interest in hydrocarbon projects, since 2005 it has diversified considerably into a variety of other overseas investments. Most of these are overseen by its investment management group,[237] and are already believed to be worth over $10 billion.[238] Most conspicuously, in 2005 Mubadala purchased a 5 percent stake, worth $130 million, in Italy's celebrated Ferrari car manufacturer. But other, much larger investments have included a 7.5 percent stake, worth $1.3 billion, in the Carlyle Group, a US-based private equity giant; an 8.3 percent stake in the Guinea Alumina Corporation, whose refinery is adjacent to one of the world's highest quality bauxite reserves; an 8.1 percent stake, worth $620 million, in Advanced Micro Devices (AMD), the world's second largest microprocessor manufacturer; and a 35 percent stake in Piaggio Aero, an Italian manufacturer of turboprop aircraft.[239] In summer 2008, Mubadala made its biggest single investment when it bought shares worth $3.3 billion in General Electric.[240] This has made Muhammad's corporation one of the top ten shareholders in one of the United States' oldest firms. Further diversifying its portfolio, in late 2008, Mubadala moved quickly to acquire a $165 million stake in Finnish wind-turbine manufacturer WinWinD[241] and a 25 percent, $50 million stake in the ailing US property company John Buck.[242] Soon, it will boost its stake in AMD to 20 percent at an additional cost of some $310 million over the original investment.[243]

Although dwarfed by the big four investment vehicles, there are numerous other sovereign wealth funds being operated by Abu Dhabi parastatals. Among these smaller funds are those operated by the Abu Dhabi National Exhibitions Company (ADNEC), which recently purchased the Excel Building

in London for $600 million,[244] and Al-Mibar International, which has announced a $600 million joint venture with a Libyan company to develop real estate and tourism projects in Libya. This has been followed up with investments in farmland and agricultural businesses in Kazakhstan, Pakistan, and the Sudan.[245] Little is known of Al-Mibar, but it may fall under the umbrella of the Mansur-chaired Abu Dhabi Fund for Development (ADFD), Abu Dhabi's primary dispenser of foreign aid, thus giving Mansur a second means of access to major overseas investments alongside the I PIC.

These formal sovereign wealth entities have very recently been joined by a number of consortia, often made up of leading Abu Dhabi businessmen and members of the ruling family. In some cases, these groups have made direct investments independently of the parastatals, most notably the Abu Dhabi United Group for Development and Investment's purchase of Britain's Manchester City football club for about $360 million in summer 2008.[246] Amongst this group's members are Mansur and Sulayman Al-Fahim, the CEO of Hydra Properties. In another high-profile case, the ubiquitous Mansur has even acted as an individual, investing some $5.2 billion in November 2008 to gain a 16 percent stake in Britain's Barclays Bank.[247] Although not a sovereign wealth investment, strictly speaking, the deal should nonetheless be classed as such given his status as a senior member of the ruling family.

*** The New Economy

Notwithstanding the enormity immensity of Abu Dhabi's oil reserves and its overseas investments, for some time there has been recognition of the need to diversify the economy or, more specifically, an effort to launch genuinely non-oil-related sectors alongside the existing energy-reliant petrochemical industries. Thus far, Abu Dhabi's diversification has lacked the pace and, as most impartial observers would concur,, the desperation evident in resource-scarce Dubai, where oil production began to decline as early as 1991.[248] However, an increasing concern over domestic employment prospects, unhealthy trade balances, and inflationary pressures has indubitably made the "new economy" a development priority.

The issue of employment for Abu Dhabi's growing population of educated young nationals is complex, and has been discussed at length elsewhere.[249] Nevertheless, it can be stated quite simply that the present makeup of the emirate's economy is not well suited to the population's future needs. Only limited numbers of jobs requiring a narrow range of skills are ever likely to be available in government departments, oil companies, or investment vehicles; and those nationals with alternative aspirations, abilities, and qualifications will remain frustrated. Moreover, the bulk of Abu Dhabi's non-oil trade has been made up of consumer imports. Most of these have been cars and electronics purchased from Japan, Germany, the United States, and Italy. While another large tranche of the non-oil trade has been made up of re-exports (mostly destined for Iran and India),[250] only the tiny remainder has consisted of genuine exports (mostly destined for Saudi Arabia and India).[251] Thus, imports have exceeded exports by about fiftyfold as the emirate has never had a strong non-oil manufacturing base. Closely connected to this problem, with little domestic economic activity and few domestic investment opportunities, the oil economy—coupled with the focus on non-tradeables and easy credit growth—has increasingly burdened Abu Dhabi with excess liquidity. Although reliable data are rarely available, there is no doubt that the UAE has been suffering from very high levels of inflation for the past five or six years. This has been exacerbated by an inability to increase interest rates, as the UAE, along with other Gulf states, has historically pegged its currency to the US dollar, with one dollar having been worth about 3.67 dirhams since 1997.[252] In 2008, the Central Bank estimated that the UAE's money supply was growing at its fastest ever rate (by about $50 billion per annum) and that inflation was at 11.1 percent.[253] This prompted one informed observer to comment that "the need for opening new investment outlets is dire in order to control inflation and maintain economic growth earnings."[254] In reality, the rate of inflation is much higher in Abu Dhabi than elsewhere in the UAE, given that it is the emirate in which liquidity has most dramatically outstripped investment opportunities. Food prices have been rising by between 15 and 20 percent per annum, and accommodation costs are undoubtedly hyperinflationary, exacerbated by an increasing expatriate population and a shortage of housing stock in the capital. Despite a rent-rise cap of 7 percent being introduced in late 2006,[255] well-appointed two-bedroom city-center apartments can no longer be acquired for less than $50,000 per annum, compared to just $16,000 per annum five years ago.

The reformers, epitomized by Sheikh Muhammad bin Zayed Al-Nahyan, wished to diversify Abu Dhabi's economy in the late 1990s in the wake of nearby developments in other economies such as Dubai, Bahrain, and Qatar. However, the latter years of Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan's reign were ones of stagnation, with no sufficient concentration of power in any one individual's hands and—as with all long-serving administrations a lack of motivation, initiative, and appetite for risk in the decision-making ranks. In many cases, young technocrats were unable to assume key roles as long- serving bureaucrats were still in place. In late 2004, however, everything changed. A new generation of rulers was empowered and an arrangement was made that saw Muhammad installed as the new crown prince and, more importantly, given almost supreme executive powers over Abu Dhabi's domestic affairs. Spearheaded by a new Executive Affairs Authority and by his flagship Mubadala Development Corporation—which even set up a new operations department alongside its existing investment management group —Muhammad inspired Abu Dhabi's captains of industry to begin focusing on the emirate's domestic economic development.

Many of the new sectors that have been prioritized by Mubadala and the other Abu Dhabi developers are ones identified for long-term sustainable growth, and the consensus is that they are well placed to withstand the global recession, regional instability, and other vagaries of the international system. Although there are new foreigner-focused real estate and tourism sectors—which are vulnerable to downswings and likely to decline in the event of nearby wars, terrorist attacks, or the emergence of more attractive alternative destinations—these activities will serve merely to add vibrancy to Abu Dhabi's economy. They are by no means intended to be bedrocks of the emirate's diversification or barometers of its success, as seems dangerously the case in Dubai. Indeed, the tourist industry alone may now account for 17 percent of Dubai's gross domestic product (GDP).[256] Moreover, as detailed below, Abu Dhabi has been more cautious with the location and nature of these activities than some of her its neighbors. This should keep to a minimum the political and social costs of a potentially culturally incompatible residential or touristic expatriate population.

Equally commendably, Abu Dhabi's new economic sectors—and all of the new buildings, plants, and facilities that they will require—are being incorporated into an all-encompassing emirate-wide master plan. Mindful of

the disorganization that has resulted from rapidly diversifying economies elsewhere in the Gulf, where government-sponsored plans have often been introduced too late to have any real impact, Abu Dhabi has been quick to introduce its “Plan Abu Dhabi 2030.” With its long-term objectives and considerations, the plan is a pioneering one, as it breaks the mold of the usual short- and medium-term plans extant elsewhere in the UAE, most notably the Dubai Strategic Plan (which only extends up to 2015 and never resulted in a comprehensive published document).[257] Drafted by the Muhammad-chaired Abu Dhabi Urban Planning Council, the plan will see the new economy expand into carefully earmarked areas of the emirate and will ensure that the necessary infrastructure is already in place. Eventually, perhaps, it will be replaced by a comprehensive federal plan for the whole of the UAE, but this will likely take several more years.

Already Plan Abu Dhabi 2030 has initiated infrastructure projects costing in excess of $400 billion, and $175 billion worth of these projects should be complete by 2012.[258] By 2015 there will be a network of tramlines in place, and by 2020 there will be a metro system and a regional train service. In contrast, Dubai’s diversification began without a plan; the city regularly grinds to a halt with traffic congestion, a mass transit system is still not finished, power outages are not infrequent, and luxury residential neighborhoods have been built adjacent to major industrial zones and other high air- and noise-pollution areas. Crucially, the global recession is unlikely to slow down Abu Dhabi’s 2030 ambitions, with government officials having already hinted that the emirate’s sovereign wealth funds and oil revenues could be drawn upon should conditions deteriorate much further. Indeed, one spokesman claimed, “The reserves are available. I’m not saying we will dip into them, but if we need them they are there ... the government will always intervene if delays to the project will affect the credibility and sustainability of business in Abu Dhabi.”[259]

*** High-Technology Heavy Industries

The centerpiece of Abu Dhabi’s new economy has been a select range of high-technology heavy industries. In most cases, these have involved the setting up of specialist subsidiary companies within the Mubadala Development Corporation or other big parastatals. The new companies have

then been turned into joint ventures as international partners have been brought on board. The latter provide the technology, the market contacts, and the credibility, while the parastatals provide the capitalization and ensure easy access to the necessary skilled labor by offering high tax-free salaries. Moreover, in some instances, the parastatals have then strengthened the ventures by making direct investments in the foreign companies. Thus, the sovereign wealth component of the old economy has been reinvigorated and applied to the new economy. This is thought to have been a particularly persuasive method of recruiting reputable yet beleaguered Western companies. As such, Abu Dhabi is using its surplus revenue to leapfrog decades of research and development (R&D) and propel itself into the First World. With little subtlety, Mubadala's own media relations department confirms the strategy, stating: "Mubadala is making capital intensive long term investments ... By partnering with top companies, we are leveraging the required expertise to build businesses in Abu Dhabi that have a global reach. Mubadala is analyzing the latest international trends and technologies as well as importing knowledge and expertise. We are also providing the facilities needed to attract and develop talent to support the growth of the sector."[260]

With little time lost since 2004, the sector has already had a major impact. For the first two quarters of 2008, it was estimated that the emirate's nonoil exports had risen by over 50 percent, while imports had risen by only 25 percent.[261] Non-oil contributions to Abu Dhabi's GDP also seem to be rising. Currently, they are thought to stand at about 40 percent, and it is predicted that they will rise to 50 percent by 2015 and to 60 percent by 2025.[262] (For the UAE as a whole, the figure will be higher, perhaps more than 60 percent, given Dubai's more diverse economic base.) One of the most prominent examples of this new high-technology manufacturing is Abu Dhabi's aerospace industry.[263] As Mubadala's CEO has explained "you can only make a studied play in five or six different sectors that you can ultimately become internationally competitive in, and we believe aerospace happens to be one of them."[264] Out of the remnants of the Gulf Aircraft Maintenance Company, originally formed in 1977 and owned by Gulf Air, Mubadala has recently crafted a new subsidiary, Abu Dhabi Aircraft Technologies (ADAT).[265] While maintenance remains at the core of its

business strategy, in summer 2008, ADAT achieved a double victory when it was awarded a contract to manufacture wing parts and other components for the European Aeronautic Defence and Space Company's (EADS) flagship A380 Superjumbo. In addition, ADAT was approved by EADS as the only company in the Middle East permitted to service A380 engines.[266]

The former would not have been possible without Mubadala's $500 million investment in an Abu Dhabi-based carbon-fiber plant, as this will provide ADAT with ready access to the materials it needs. The latter would not have been possible without technological input from Rolls- Royce as part of a deal brokered by Mubadala earlier in 2008. In the near future, ADAT will also be supported by a new $8 billion high-technology joint venture in Abu Dhabi set up by Mubadala and General Electric,[267] the above-mentioned recipient of a large Mubadala sovereign wealth injection. Over the next five years, ADAT plans to increase its annual revenues to $1 billion, expanding its maintenance operations from existing Gulf customers such as Etihad Airways and Qatar Airways into the Indian market,[268] and by 2013, it hopes to win contracts to manufacture parts for EADS's forthcoming A350. In the long term, ADAT intends to export its components to other buyers—with Italy's Finmeccanica having already signaled an interest—and it has even stated that it eventually intends to assemble entire aircraft in Abu Dhabi.[269]

In the near future, Abu Dhabi will move into the manufacture of computer microprocessors, with Mubadala's stake in AMD having unsurprisingly led to a new joint venture in the emirate between AMD and another new Mubadala subsidiary, the Advanced Technology Investment Company (ATIC). The venture, tentatively named "The Foundry," is now 66 percent owned by ATIC, and will produce video cards, mobile phones, and consumer electronics, in addition to processors.[270]

Shipbuilding has been identified as another priority area, with the Abu Dhabi Shipbuilding Company (ADSB) having recently begun manufacturing entire ships. It is unlikely that there will be an overseas market for ADSB, but its production will at least contribute toward import substitution. Originally set up in 1996 by Sheikh Muhammad bin Zayed Al-Nahyan (as part of Abu Dhabi's "Offsets Programme" to channel a portion of the profits of foreign arms suppliers into the emirate's domestic development)[271] for the

purposes of repairing UAE Navy and UAE Coastguard vessels, it is now 40 percent Mubadala-owned and holds a $1 billion contract to build six new Baynunah Class corvettes for the UAE Navy.[272] This has been made possible by a Mubadala-arranged joint venture with a British naval defense company, BVT Surface Fleet,[273] and with France's Constructions Mecaniques de Normandie (CMN).[274] ADSB has already manufactured several naval landing crafts, some of which have been sold to the Royal Navy of Oman.[275] It is thought that ADSB has also teamed up with another French manufacturer to build some small amphibious craft and mini-submarines, although these may be far from completion.[276] The new shipping industry will be complemented by the manufacture of integrated naval defense systems by Abu Dhabi Systems Integration (ADSI), a joint venture between ADSB and Selex Sistemi Integrati, which in turn is a division of the aforementioned Finmeccanica.[277]

Further connecting Abu Dhabi's new industries to the military and thereby fulfilling two purposes—economic diversification and improved security—has been a spate of joint ventures with Western arms and security equipment manufacturers. These includea three-way partnership between Emirates Advanced Investments, Raytheon, and Lockheed Martin to produce Javelin portable anti-tank missiles. Significantly, these will be sold to both the UAE military and to international customers.[278] Other projects include the joint manufacture with European companies of military motorcycles, Jeeps, and reconnaissance aircraft.[279] Further examples include Biodentity, an Abu Dhabi-based company set up by the Abu Dhabi Investment Company and Canada's Cryptometrics, after the latter reportedly received an investment from ADIC. Biodentity will manufacture biometric face-scan systems, which will be sold to Abu Dhabi International Airport and other airports in the region.[280] Most recently, and on a much larger scale, Mubadala has set up a $1.2 billion subsidiary, Al-Yah Satellites, which will build military and commercial satellites. Its technology partner is Astrium, a division of EADS, and the pair intends to launch the satellites from Kazakhstan and sell them to the UAE military and to other customers in southern Europe, Africa, and Southeast Asia.[281]

*** Future Energy Industries

Alongside the aerospace industry, the various military manufacturers, and other areas of non-oil diversification, there has also been an effort to build up “future energy” and other green industries. As one spokesman[282] has explained: “Abu Dhabi knows the energy business rather well. It also enjoys competitive advantages allowing it to successfully establish these new industries, while simultaneously diversifying its economy and providing high-quality job opportunities.”[283] Moreover, despite the irony of Abu Dhabi being one of the largest hydrocarbon exporters, support for nature and for improving the environment have historically been key legitimacy resources for the emirate’s rulers. In addition, there has long been a concern over the environmental impact of Abu Dhabi’s rapid economic development. The World Wildlife Fund recently announced that the UAE has the worst carbon footprint per capita in the world, over five times greater than the global average.[284] In Abu Dhabi specifically, waste per capita has been estimated at over 2.3 kg per day, most of it dumped into pits in the desert,[285] which is much more than the 1.5 kg average for Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) countries.[286] Therefore, the launching of this new sector is actually serving three purposes: economic, political, and environmental.

In 2006, the Mubadala Development Corporation established yet another subsidiary to pioneer these developments, the Abu Dhabi Future Energy Company (ADFEC). The plan was for $4 billion of the new company’s budget to come directly from Mubadala, while the remainder of its anticipated $22 billion budget would be drawn from international partners through joint ventures, thereby making the entity an excellent (and wholesome) FDI vehicle. ADFEC’s first major project has been Masdar City, a large carbon-neutral development in Abu Dhabi’s hinterland. Sheikh Muhammad bin Zayed Al-Nahyan laid the virtual cornerstone in 2008 on Masdar’s Web site.[287] The original aim was for ADFEC to provide the infrastructure for a “free zone” that would allow up to 1,500 renewableenergy and other environment-related international companies to base themselves in Masdar, or at least have their regional headquarters there. Some of these companies will be focused on carbon-capture technologies, and it is expected that they will export their services to nearby countries still relying on outdated hydrocarbon-extraction technologies. For every ton of captured carbon gas,

the Masdar-based companies will receive 12 euros as per the carbon credit market established by the Kyoto Protocol, which will help to offset the rent they will pay to ADFEC.[288] Moreover, ADFEC itself is also hoping to benefit directly from carbon credit schemes should the United Nations' proposed Clean Development Mechanism be introduced. This system will provide remuneration for those companies that store captured carbon gas underground, and ADFEC plans to pipe captured gas from existing power plants in Abu Dhabi to disused underground oil wells in the desert.[289] In early 2010, the Masdar plans were somewhat downsized, as they had originally also contained plans for a sizeable real estate development. But it seems that the renewable-energy free-zone initiative remains in place.

ADFEC is also hoping to attract R&D-focused companies to Masdar in an effort to make Abu Dhabi the region's capital for green technologies. As another result of the Mubadala-General Electric agreements, one of these will be a joint venture that will also involve investments from Siemens and Credit Suisse. This company will employ more than a hundred experts and manage a $50 million "clean technology fund."[290] Similarly, Mubadala's above-mentioned investment in WinWinD is likely to lead to a wind-power joint venture in Masdar.[291] In support of all these companies will be a new research center, the Masdar Institute, and it would appear that the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Imperial College London, the Toyko Institute of Technology, Columbia University, and the German Aerospace Centre have all agreed to assist.[292]

In the near future, ADFEC will build a number of non-hydrocarbon power plants in Abu Dhabi. The first of these—a $350 million solar plant in cooperation with the German Aerospace Centre—should be completed by the end of 2010.[293] The next big step will be nuclear energy, as discussed, with the company having announced that these plants will meet 30 percent of Abu Dhabi's energy needs by 2012. As with Masdar, a range of foreign expertise will be brought on board, with several international cooperation agreements already having been signed.[294] Certainly, the plan at present would seem to be that the uranium required by the South Korean-built plants will not be enriched in Abu Dhabi, but will instead come from a proposed international "nuclear bank," which will cost $150 million to set up. Orchestrated by the Nuclear Threat Initiative, a non-governmental organization, the bank's financial backers already include Warren Buffet, the

Norwegian government, and the United States government. Not surprisingly, in 2008 the federal minister for foreign affairs, Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed Al-Nahyan, pledged that the UAE would also make a sizeable contribution.[295]

Many observers had predicted that either a French or US-Japanese consortium would be successful in winning Abu Dhabi's nuclear contract given the experience of those countries in building nuclear plants and their longstanding economic relations with the UAE. These predictions were based on three core assumptions. Firstly, that the Western and Japanese companies had been building nuclear plants since the 1970s, whereas South Korean companies were, as recently as the 1990s, in some cases, still being disqualified from international engineering contracts on the grounds of inexperience of undertaking technically complex projects,[296] despite South Korea having constructed its first nuclear plant over thirty years ago.[297] Secondly, France had signed a number of recent high- profile agreements with the UAE, including one for the establishment of a military base in the western province of Abu Dhabi in 2009. France's Areva company had also already built a number of installations in the UAE, including power and desalination plants. Thirdly, much was read into the fact that the UAE had allowed the French and US-Japanese consortia to have several opportunities to revise their prices downwards over the course of the year, thus giving them the chance to come closer to the South Korean price, which was likely much lower.[298] Indeed, it was reported that the South Korean price was several billion dollars less than the best French price,[299] mainly as a result of its APR-1400 being at least 20 percent cheaper to manufacture.[300]

However, these views grossly underestimated the rapidly increasing economic interdependence between Abu Dhabi and South Korea. The latter is an almost 100 percent net energy importer, while the former has risen to become its second greatest oil and gas supplier. Moreover, since 2003, when Samsung Engineering and Construction began work on the Abu Dhabi Investment Authority's new headquarters, South Korean companies have been a major and visible presence in the UAE's construction industry, and are regularly backed by strong diplomatic support from their government. Indeed, the nuclear plant construction contract was deemed so lucrative to South Korea that its prime minister visited Abu Dhabi in summer 2009 specifically to support his country's consortium,[301] and in November 2009 the South Korean minister for foreign affairs met with the crown prince of

Abu Dhabi to stress again the benefits of awarding the contract to South Korea.[302] After winning the contract, the news was greeted by strong applause in South Korea, where it was deemed likely that the South Korean-led consortium was now best placed to win several subsequent UAE contracts, including a sixty-year maintenance contract for the first wave of nuclear power plants and a contract to construct four additional power plants, which will probably be worth an extra $20 billion. In total, it was estimated that the UAE venture would create over 100,000 jobs for South Koreans and UAE nationals.[303]

*** Exclusive Real Estate

The issue of foreign ownership of real estate is highly sensitive. Since their respective dates of independence, the Gulf states have all prohibited foreign ownership by law on the grounds that certain activities, most notably landlordship, were to be exclusively for nationals. In recent years, certain parts of the Gulf, led by Dubai since 1997, have relaxed their rules, at first permitting long leaseholds and then granting freeholds. In the summer of 2005, Abu Dhabi finally followed suit, allowing renewable ninety-nine- year leases for foreigners.[304] Although the sector is far from being a central component of Abu Dhabi’s new economy, it is nevertheless viewed as an additional stream of domestic investment and employment opportunities for Abu Dhabi nationals, a useful foreign direct investment (FDI) tool, and undoubtedly a means of improving the emirate’s international reputation and visibility.

Abu Dhabi’s new real estate sector cannot be compared easily with the developments that have taken place in its neighbors, in part because the motivations behind its creation are very different; there is no desperation to bring in foreign money. Almost all of the emirate’s real estate projects are at the very highest end of the market. Despite being an immature industry, its prices are far higher on average than those in Dubai, Qatar, Ajman, Ra’s al-Khaimah, and other areas. There are no middle or low-end developments, and none seem to be planned. Moreover, all the major real estate projects—as per Plan Abu Dhabi 2030—have been carefully corralled into specified areas of the city. Keen to avoid embarrassing overlaps of nonMuslim residents with more conservative Abu Dhabi nationals and other Gulf Arabs,

most of the emirate’s “Dubai-style” properties, complete with bars and nightclubs, will be situated on Reem, a large island off the main island’s eastern coast. Meanwhile, most of the properties targeted at Gulf Arabs (and in some cases, restricted to Gulf Arabs) are being built either on the main island or on the hinterland approaches to Abu Dhabi. In addition, it is notable that the authorities have been keen to market Abu Dhabi real estate in a more discreet fashion; rarely will one see large advertisements featuring alcohol-imbibing Western or Levantine women in revealing attire, as is often the case in Dubai, but rather scenes depicting family life, perhaps with small children and modestly dressed women covering their hair. Furthermore, for those projects clearly targeting Gulf Arabs, the advertisements invariably stress the “community facilities” that will be available, namely mosques. Abu Dhabi does not want a repeat of Dubai Marina, where many of the community’s Muslim residents were appalled to find no mosque on the entire 150,000-inhabitant development.[305]

Abu Dhabi needs also to avoid an oversupply of property and the inevitable price correction, which is taking place in the other nascent real estate sectors elsewhere in the Gulf. Although there are now many property developers operating in Abu Dhabi, some of which have even brought on board foreign backers,[306] and some of which have offered securitized sharia-compliant Islamic bonds {sukuk) to raise capital,[307] there are nonetheless only a few master developers that control the main zones and are responsible for the necessary real estate infrastructure. These master developers are all either majority owned by parastatals or are companies with ties so close to key members of the ruling family that they are still effectively under the government’s control. In contrast, only 50 percent of Dubai’s real estate stock is controlled by government entities, and it is predicted that Dubai will soon have as many property units reaching completion as Shanghai, a city with 13 times Dubai’s population. The scale of this impending glut, and the government’s inability to scale it back, led market analysts and ratings agencies to predict in summer 2008 that “the magnitude of price corrections in [Dubai], should they occur, could be substantial.”[308] Certainly, as the global downswing finally reached Dubai’s shores in October 2008, prices began to plummet. And since then, as has been discussed extensively in the international media, the value of most Dubai properties has continued to fall drastically, with several planned developments being suspended and employees at major developers being made redundant.[309] Significantly, although Abu Dhabi still has real estate

projects totaling over $20 billion underway,[310] any sustained drop in demand and house prices in the emirate can be tided over by the other sectors of the economy.

Aldar Properties was the first of Abu Dhabi's new real estate companies, and its pioneering role can be compared to that of Dubai's Emaar Properties. With the Mubadala Development Corporation and the Abu Dhabi Investment Company as its two major shareholders (each with 17 percent stakes),[311] and with the managing directors of both Mubadala and the I PIC sitting on its board,[312] Aldar is synonymous with the establishment, and probably accounts for over $4 billion of the sector total.[313] Thus far, it has specialized in developments aimed at Abu Dhabi nationals and other Gulf Arabs. Its first project, Raha Beach, is now close to completion, and most apartments and villas have sold for $800 per square foot.[314] Its other developments include Al-Gurm Resort, a collection of luxury chalets close to the emirate's mangrove swamps, and Coconut Island, which will consist of villas exclusively for Gulf nationals. Aldar has also ripped out the city's fire-damaged old souk district and is building the enormous Central Market on the site. This multistoried complex straddling Khalifa Street will feature a shopping mall topped by luxury apartments.

The Reem Island developments are being master planned by Tamouh, Al-Reem Investments, and Sorouh. Together, the three companies have divided the island into different zones, with Tamouh's 60 percent share consisting of the City of Lights and Marina Square; with Al-Reem building Najmat village; and with Sorouh building the Al-Shams and Saraya resorts. The largest of the three companies, Tamouh, is owned by the Royal Group, which in turn is owned by Sheikh Tahnun bin Zayed Al-Nahyan, a younger full brother of the crown prince. Tahnun is also chairman of Al-Reem, and although Sorouh has a large number of shareholders, it is nevertheless believed to be under the patronage of the ruler's two sons, Sheikhs Sultan and Muhammad bin Khalifa Al-Nahyan.

Blessed with several small islands close to the main island, Abu Dhabi has had no need to resort to costly land reclamation (although some does take place), and over the next few years these, too, will be developed. Mubadala will focus on Sowwah Island, where it intends to build both commercial and residential real estate, and a new headquarters for the Abu Dhabi Securities Exchange.[315] Most of the development will be undertaken by John Buck International, a joint venture born out of Mubadala's abovementioned investment in the eponymous US property firm.[316] Most ambitiously, on nearby Nurai Island, a new company, Zaya, will initiate a $1 billion project comprising only villas. Each will retail for over $25 million, and will only be reachable by private yacht or helicopter. Soon, even the giant 1,000-acre man-made Lulu Island, which since its completion in 1992 has stood undeveloped off the Abu Dhabi corniche, will be built upon, with Sorouh recently having its master plan approved.[317]

*** Luxury and Cultural Tourism

Although again secondary to the main thrust of Abu Dhabi's new economy, the emirate's tourism industry is expanding rapidly. Today, there are a modest 10,000 hotel rooms available, but by 2012 it is expected there will be 25,000, and by 2030 there will be 75,000. As with the real estate sector, much of the tourism industry will be in the hands of a few major developers, with Aldar alone planning to construct over forty of Abu Dhabi's new hotels.[318] Moreover, Abu Dhabi is again aiming at the highest end of the market, perhaps in an effort to ensure more culturally compatible visitors to the emirate. In summer 2008, the capital's flagship hotel, the Emirates Palace, submitted itself to the Guinness Book of Records for offering the most expensive package holiday deal in history: $1 million for seven nights.[319] Among the biggest projects already underway are a 200-room "eco-tourist" hotel and marina being built in the mangrove swamps, and a $3 billion 600-room MGM Grand Hotel being constructed in association with Las Vegas's MGM Mirage group.[320] Most of these new hotels will be clustered in specific areas, thereby keeping potentially unpalatable community overlaps to the minimum, and segregation will increase dramatically, with even public beaches charging fees for unaccompanied men and having exclusive areas for families and more obvious tourists.[321] Abu Dhabi clearly does not relish a repeat of Dubai's beach sex scandal of summer

2008, which resulted in two British nationals being arrested for alleged indecent conduct on a public stretch of Jumeirah beach.[322]

The big parastatals are supporting the sector by planning a wide range of cultural tourist activities, and these should help position the emirate as a distinct alternative to the more mid-market sun-and-shopping tourist trade of Dubai and other Gulf states. Much of the emirate's strategy has been developed by the Office of the Brand of Abu Dhabi (OBAD), which falls under the umbrella of the Abu Dhabi Tourism Authority (ADTA). The latter tends to hire well-known publicity firms in the five or so countries where it has branch offices, and these in turn place advertisements in highbrow publications.[323] Soon, ADTA expects to have ten additional overseas offices, and it is likely that these will adopt the same tactic. The Mubadala Development Corporation is, naturally, also heavily involved. A Mubadala subsidiary,[324] the Tourism Development Investment Company (TDIC), has already organized several high-profile exhibitions at the Emirates Palace.

One such event, a Picasso exhibition, was thought to have brought 40,000 visitors to the capital.

Most famously, at a total cost of over $27 billion, TDIC is developing Saadiyat, "the island of happiness," into Abu Dhabi's major cultural hub. Linked by ten bridges to the main island, by 2012 Saadiyat will be home to branches of the Louvre and Guggenheim museums in addition to a new Sheikh Zayed National Museum, a performing arts center, a maritime museum, and a nineteen-pavilion cultural park. The Louvre Abu Dhabi will alone cost $110 million to build, and TDIC has agreed to pay a further $520 million forthe Louvre brand name and forthe loan of various exhibitions and collections. As a further incentive, it is thought that Abu Dhabi will finance a new art research center in Paris, to pay for the restoration of Chateau de Fontainebleau's theater, to be renamed after Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al-Nahyan, and to provide $32 million to help the Louvre repair a wing of the Pavilion de Flore. When complete, the latter will host a new gallery of international art named after the late Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al-Nahyan.[325] The Guggenheim Abu Dhabi will be the sixth international branch of the renowned New York museum. The new building, to be designed by Frank Gehry, will cover over 30,000 square meters and will become one of the

world’s largest exhibition centers.[326] Equally impressively, the building for the new national museum will be the result of an international architecture competition. It is likely to feature at least four different galleries focusing on Abu Dhabi’s heritage, its environment, Zayed’s leadership, and the region’s economic transformation.[327]

Alongside culture and the arts, the sector will also be boosted by a series of high-profile sporting events and world-class leisure facilities. Building upon ADTA’s staging of the world’s first Formula One festival in 2007,[328] in something of a coup for Abu Dhabi, the emirate began hosting the championship-decider Formula One Grand Prix in 2009. A circuit was constructed on Yas Island by Aldar, and eventually there will be facilities to host over 100,000 spectators. Elsewhere on the island there will be other motor-racing and sports-related developments totaling $40 billion, including hotels, restaurants, golf courses, and a giant Ferrari theme park.[329] Building upon its above-mentioned acquisition of a stake in the Italian company, Mubadala has effectively made Ferrari Abu Dhabi’s “home team,” and has cemented the relationship further by signing a three-year sponsorship agreement that will see Ferrari Fl cars featuring the Mubadala logo prominently on their nosecones.[330] Bizarrely, skiing will also become possible in Abu Dhabi, with Tamouh building a giant indoor ski slope on Jebel Hafit, the UAE’s second highest mountain. Tamouh promises that this development will be aimed at both leisure seekers and professionals, and will therefore escape the criticisms of gimmickry that are often leveled at Dubai’s indoor slope at the Mall of the Emirates.[331] Music, too, features prominently in Abu Dhabi’s tourism strategy. Mubadala has already staged Bon Jovi, Justin Timberlake, and Christina Aguilera concerts at the Emirates Palace and has promised several further high-profile acts in the next few years. And it is thought that negotiations are in an advanced stage with leading opera and theater companies.

Also in support of tourism, and indeed all of Abu Dhabi’s new sectors, especially the new aerospace industry, has been the highly successful launch of a new international airline. Having withdrawn in 2003 from the loss-making Gulf Air partnership with Bahrain, Qatar, and Oman, Abu Dhabi unilaterally set up Etihad Airways.[332] Rather daringly, the new airline, chaired by Sheikh Ahmad bin Saif Al-Nahyan, immediately declared itself to be the “official national carrier ofthe UAE,” despite Dubai’s award-winning

Emirates Airline being in the eighteenth year of its operation. Nevertheless, Etihad has been able to prove itself very quickly, and over the last few years Ahmad has purchased several billion dollars worth of aircraft.[333] While Fmirates undoubtedly stole most of 2008's headlines by taking receipt of its first A380s, Etihad was quietly placing a $43 billion order for over 200 new aircraft, including a mixture of A380s and Boeing 787 Dreamliners.[334] As the largest single order in civil aviation history, this will soon transform Etihad into one of the world's largest carriers, thereby making its growth trajectory even more impressive than that of the Emirates and its other principal rival, Qatar Airways. Ultimately, however, it may be unsustainable for three large carriers to be operating from hubs that are so close to each other. Eventually, part of this problem may resolve itself as the Abu Dhabi and Dubai governments become closer due to the latter's reliance on federal assistance. In this scenario, one would expect the two UAE-based carriers to cooperate at a much higher level.

Nonetheless, underpinning Etihad's current phenomenal expansion, the Abu Dhabi government has committed to a massive upgradation of air travel infrastructure, with the new Abu Dhabi Airports Company (ADAC) spearheading the redevelopment of Abu Dhabi International Airport at a cost of $6.8 billion. By 2012, two new terminals will have been added, expanding the airport's annual capacity from about 7 million to over 20 million passengers, most of whom will be tourists and transit passengers.

Elsewhere in the emirate, ADAC will also expand the o'd Al-Ayn airport and will redevelop the former military airport in Bateen to become "City H Airport," the first dedicated airport for private jets in the Middle East.[335]

*** V Conclusion

With ninety years of remaining hydrocarbon production and with its plans to keep increasing oil output in the near future, Abu Dhabi will have the resources and surpluses it needs— regardless of the current downswing—to extend considerably its historic strategy of building up petrodollar- financed overseas investments. With acquisitions across North America and Europe, and increasingly in Asia, Africa, and the Middle East, the emirate's plethora

of government-backed investment vehicles are already in control of funds several times greater than those of Kuwait, China, Norway, and other prominent asset- managing states. Moreover, since the passing of its greatest patriarch in 2004, Abu Dhabi has been stirred into even more inspired action by a dynamic new leadership. Undoubtedly, a sleeping giant has awoken, and a multidimensional domestic economy is being built up to provide employment and investment opportunities for both citizens and for an expanding population of skilled expatriates. Without the urgency to diversify faced by Dubai and other Gulf economies confronted with declining oil reserves, Abu Dhabi has been able to introduce more carefully than its neighbors a variety of non-oil activities, including high-technology heavy industries, renewable-energy industries, a luxury real estate market, and cultural tourism. With astute management and strong government backing, these sectors should all be able to weather the looming global recession and will likely morph steadily over the next decade to form one of the most impressive and vibrant economies in the Arab world.

[178] Dubai’s share is now only 4 percent, with the remainder being made up of minimal exports from Sharjah, Ra’s al-Khaimah, and Fujairah. Ajman and Umm al-Qawain do not have commercially exploitable oil reserves. US Energy Information Administration, The United Arab Emirates: Country Analysis Brief (Washington D.C.: EIA, 2007).

[179] Oxford Business Group, “Abu Dhabi: The Report 2007.”

[180] UAE Central Bank estimates, 2008.

[181] The ZADCO concession will last until 2026. The ADMA concession will last until 2018. The ADCO concession will last until 2014.

[182] Christopher M. Davidson, The United Arab Emirates: A Study in Survival (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 2005), 94–95.

[183] Bloomberg, August 7, 2008.

[184] In 1999, ADNOC revenues were estimated at $13 billion, while supposedly increasing to $56 billion in 2006. Jean-Francois Seznec, “The Gulf Sovereign Wealth Funds: Myths and Reality,” Middle East Policy 15:2 (2008): 99.

[185] The National, July 24, 2008; ADGAS statistics, 2007.

[186] Oxford Business Group, “Abu Dhabi: The Report 2007,” 151; Davidson 2005, 94–5.

[187] Oxford Business Group, “Abu Dhabi: The Report 2007,” 151.

[188] The National, July 24, 2008; Personal interviews, Abu Dhabi, April 2008.

[189] Financial Times, July 8, 2008.

[190] ADGAS statistics, 2007.

[191] Oxford Business Group, “Abu Dhabi: The Report 2007,” 152.

[192] The remainder being oil and liquid fuelled. Gulf News, July 21, 2008.

[193] The National, July 24, 2008.

[194] Economist Intelligence Unit, 2000; Oxford Business Group, “United Arab Emirates: The Report 2000,” 54–5. The second phase of the project will involve building an underwater pipeline from Oman to Pakistan.

[195] Oxford Business Group, “Abu Dhabi: The Report 2007.”

[196] Middle East Economic Digest, January 8, 2010; David A. Stott, “South Korea’s Global Nuclear Ambitions,” Asia-Pacific Journal 12 (March 2010).

[197] The Kish and Henjam offshore fields will soon be exploited. Tehran Times, January 2, 2008.

[198] AME Info, May 21, 2008.

[199] “Taqa” translates as “energy” into English.

[200] Tne National, April 5, 2008.

[201] Personal interviews, Abu Dhabi, April 2008.

[202] Oxford Business Group, “Abu Dhabi: The Report 2007,” 202.

[203] Ibid., p. 202; Oxford Business Group, “United Arab Emirates: The Report 2000,” 94–5.

[204] Oxford Business Group, “Abu Dhabi: The Report 2007,” 212.

[205] The latter is being built at Ruwais in cooperation with Rio Tinto. National, July 24, 2008; Seznec, 101.

[206] Borealis press release, March 19, 2008.

[207] Arabian Business, August 29, 2008.

[208] Oxford Business Group, “Abu Dhabi: The Report 2007,” 203.

[209] Ibid., 204.

[210] Gulf Today, July 18, 2007; Personal interviews, Abu Dhabi, August 2007.

[211] Oxford Business Group, “Abu Dhabi: The Report 2007,” 214.

[212] The National, March 15, 2010. Quoting ADIA’s first fund review, published in March 2010.

[213] The Government of Singapore Investment Corporation being the largest. Economist, January 17, 2008.

[214] Norges Bank press release, May 2008. The largest Norwegian fund is the Government Pension Fund of Norway.

[215] Notably the Kuwait Investment Authority. Reuters, June 20, 2008.

[216] Notably the Qatar Investment Authority. New York Times, December 11, 2007.

[217] Hendrik Van der Meulen, “The Role of Tribal and Kmship Ties in the Politics of the United Arab Emirates” (PhD diss . Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, Tufts University, 1997), 93.

[218] Personal interviews, Dubai, January 2007.

[219] ADIA is based in the new Samsung building on the Corniche, which was completed in 2006. It has now eclipsed the Hilton Hotel’s Baynunah Tower to become the tallest building in Abu Dhabi.

[220] Economist, January 17, 2008; Seznec, 97, 101; Sovereign Wealth Fund Institute, data for 2008.

[221] It was reported in January 2009 that ADIA had lost about $125 billion. Bloomberg, January 15, 2009.

[222] Personal interviews, London, May 2008; New York Times, November 27, 2007.

[223] Business Week, June 6, 2008; Arabian Business, June 8, 2008.

[224] Personal correspondence, August 2008.

[225] ^{ez} Said bin Mubarak Rashid Al-Hajiri.

[226] N.°w York Times, February 28, 2008; Personal interviews, London, May 2008; Oxford Business Group, “Abu Dhabi: The Report 2007,” 43.

[227] Seznec, 100; Personal correspondence, August 2008. Seznec puts ADIC at $7 billion.

[228] Khalifa bin Muhammad Al-Kindi is the chair of ADIC, while Nasser bin Hamad Al- Suwaidi is the deputy chair.

[229] Al-Bawaba, July 13, 2008.

[230] Personal interviews, London, May 2008.

[231] Seznec, 101.

[232] Ibid., 101; National, August 5, 2008.

[233] Zawya Dow Jones, September 18, 2007.

[234] The National, July 21, 2008.

[235] National, September 11, 2008.

[236] Mubadala holds 51 percent of Dolphin. Total and Occidental each hold 24.5 percent. Oxford Business Group, “Abu Dhabi: The Report 2007,” 128.

[237] <sup>Seznec, 100.

[238] Ibid., 100.

[239] Ibid., 100–1; Mubadala press release, December 2007; AMD press release, November 16 2007.

[240] The National, July 22, 2008.

[241] AMEInfo, September 23, 2008. The purchase of this stake was reported as being carried out by Masdar, a subsidiary of Mubadala.

[242] The National, December 4, 2008.

[243] The National, December 9, 2008.

[244] Personal interviews, London, June 2008.

[245] The National, May 20, 2008.

[246] International Herald Tribune, September 2, 2008.

[247] Reuters, October 31, 2008.

[248] By 1995, production had dropped to around 300,000 barrels per day. Christopher M. Davidson, Dubai: The Vulnerability of Success (London: Hurst, 2008), 101.

[249] Christopher M. Davidson, “Abu Dhabi: Labour Nationalization,” in Landerprofile: Edition Golfstaaten, December 2008, 28–9.

[250] The National, July 26, 2008.

[251] The National, July 18, 2008; Personal interviews, Abu Dhabi, April 2008.

[252] Oxford Business Group, “Abu Dhabi: The Report 2007,” 38.

[253] Gulf News, July 13, 2008.

[254] Ahmad bin Muhammad Al-Samerai.

[255] Oxford Business Group, “Abu Dhabi: The Report 2007,” 54.

[256] Oxford Business Group, “Dubai: The Report 2007,” authors’ estimates.

[257] An exception being Oman’s “Oman Vision 2020.”

[258] Middle East Economic Digest, June 6, 2008.

[259] Financial Times, December 17, 2008, quoting Hussein Nowais, chairman of Abu Dhabi Basic Industries.

[260] Mubadala Development Corporation press release, July 2008, with reference to the aerospace industry.

[261] Trie National, July 26, 2008. Quoting the Abu Dhabi Department for Planning and the Economy.

[262] Khaleej Times, May 11, 2008.

[263] Middle East Econoriijc Digest, June 6, 2008.

[264] The National, July 12, 2008.

[265] Ibid.; Personal interviews, Abu Dhabi, April 2008.

[266] The National, July 22, 2008.

[267] Ibid.

[268] The National, July 12, 2008; Personal interviews, Abu Dhabi, April 2008.

[269] The National, July 31, 2008.

[270] The National, December 9, 2008.

[271] Davidson 2005, 127–8.

[272] Oxford Business Group, “Abu Dhabi: The Report 2007,” 203. The Baynunah Class co’-vettes are 70m “multi-mission” naval corvettes. AME Info, January 8, 2007.

[273] The National, July 20, 2008; Gulf News, August 2, 2008.

[274] CNM press release, December 21, 2008.

[275] AMEInfo, January 8, 2007.

[276] Personal interviews, London, May 2008.

[277] The National, July 20, 2008.

[278] The National, July 30, 2008; Personal interviews, Abu Dhabi, April 2008.

[279] It is thought that the light aircraft will be called Mako, and the Jeeps are some sort of stealth Jeeps. Davidson 2008, 266.

[280] Gulf News, July 20, 2008; National, July 14, 2008; National, July 20, 2008.

[281] Personal interviews, London, May 2008; to some extent corroborated by National, A ugust 6, 2008.

[282] Sultan bin Ahmad Al-Jaber, the CEO of ADFEC.

[283] Arabian Business, December 8, 2007.

[284] Personal correspondence with Mari I uomi, September 2008.

[285] los Although there are plans to set up a center to treat hazardous garbage by the Environmental Agency Abu Dhabi, and a new $200 million recycling plant is being built at Al-Mafraq by the Abu Dhabi Municipality..

[286] The National, July 22, 2008.

[287] See [[http://www.masdaruae.com][www.masdaruae.com]]

[288] The National, July 23, 2008.

[289] The National, December 10, 2008.

[290] The National, July 22, 2008.

[291] AME Info, September 23, 2008.

[292] Masdar City press release, July 2008.

[293] Arabian Business, December 8, 2007.

[294] Gulf News, July 31, 2008.

[295] Gulf News, August 7, 2008.

[296] Middle East Economic Digest, January 8, 2010.

[297] Korea Times, January 12, 2010.

[298] Middle East Economic Digest, January 8, 2010; David A. Stott, “South Korea’s Global Nuclear Ambitions,” Asia-Pacific Journal 12 (March 2010).

[299] Power-Gen Worldwide, March 3, 2010.

[300] Business Week, March 2, 2010.

[301] Asia Pulse, August 3, 2009; Platts, August 11, 2009.

[302] Utilities-ME, November 19, 2009.

[303] The National, December 28, 2009; Stott 2010.

[304] Emirates News Agency (WAM), August 14, 2005.

[305] At present, there only appears to be a non-Muslim-specific prayer room above the Marina’s main supermarket.

[306] In summer 2008, Al-Madina Finance, a Kuwaiti investment vehicle, invested nearly $1 billion in a multi-tower Reem Island project. National, July 20, 2008.

[307] There has been a very high uptake, with Aldar having issued a 3.75 billion dirham bond and with Sorouh having issued a 4 billion dirham bond. National, July 14, 2008.

[308] Financial Times, July 9, 2008. Quoting Fitch ratings agency.

[309] Bloomberg, December 4, 2008; Daily Telegraph, November 21, 2008; Guardian, December 5, 2008; Financial Times, November 14, 2008.

[310] The National, July 18, 2008; Author’s estimates.

[311] The National, December 4, 2008.

[312] Khaldun bin Khalifa Al-Mubarak and Khadem bin Abdullah Al-Qubaisi respectively.

[313] The National, July 29, 2008.

[314] The National, July 23, 2008.

[315] AME Info, March 7, 2006.

[316] The National, December 4, 2008.

[317] AME Info, March 7, 2006.

[318] Gulf Construction 29:8 (2008).

[319] Gulf News, August 5, 2008.

[320] The National, May 12, 2008.

[321] The National, July 12, 2008.

[322] Daily Mail, July 19, 2008.

[323] The National, July 12, 2008.

[324] The relationship between Mubadala and the TDIC is unclear. But it is widely understood that the TDIC is under Mubadala's umbrella, with ADTA being its sole shareholder. There is some overlap in board membership, with Muhammad bin Saif Al-Mazrui serving on both the Mubadala and TDIC boards.

[325] New York Times, March 7, 2008; Financial Times, December 17, 2008.

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[329] Bloomberg, November 26, 2006.

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[332] Today, Gulf Air is effectively Bahrain’s national carrier. It has predicted losses of over $1 billion over the next few years. National, August 4, 2008.

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** Are Today’s Globalized Cathedrals of Consumption Tomorrow’s Global Dinosaurs?

George Ritzer

The process of globalization is extremely powerful and, indeed, it may be said that we are living in a “global age.” Globalization is defined here as “a transplanetary process or set of processes involving increasing liquidity and growing multidirectional flows of people, objects, places and information and the structures they encounter and create that are barriers to, or that expedite, those flows.” Various terms employed in this definition— processes, flows, liquids, and expediting structures—help us understand the key issues to be dealt with in this article—the global spread of the “cathedrals of consumption,” the economic slump that began in late 2007 and the impact of that slump on consumption (as well as “hyperconsumption”), and the cathedrals of consumption around the world. Most generally, we will argue that globalization expedited the revolution in consumption in general, and in the cathedrals of consumption in particular, and that at the end of the first

decade of the twenty-first century it may well be expediting the devolution of both. That is, consumption is in decline—and savings is up—at least in the short run, and the cathedrals of consumption, especially the most spectacular of them, now look increasingly like dinosaurs possibly on the brink of extinction. This is seen as a big problem in the United States, the source of most of the modern cathedrals of consumption, but even more so in other countries to which the cathedrals of consumption have been exported. Special attention is devoted to Las Vegas, Dubai, and Macau, areas that have witnessed a massive expansion of the cathedrals of consumption. It is in those areas, especially among the newer cathedrals of consumption, as well as those under construction, that we see the greatest danger of "Dinosaurization." A decade ago, I wrote a book dealing with what I called the "cathedrals of consumption."[336] These are consumption settings that had, in the main, come into existence in the United States in the post-World War II era. Of particular interest were the most grandiose of these consumption settings, including major indoor shopping malls, mega-maPs (e.g., Mall of America), theme parks (especially Disneyland and Disney World), cruise ships, and, above all, the themed casino-hotels that came to dominate the Las Vegas Strip. In the last decades of the twentieth century and the first few years of the twenty-first century, these cathedrals of consumption became increasingly ubiquitous and predominant not only throughout the United States, but also globally. The latter trend is particularly clear in and around the booming economies of China and the Arabian Peninsula, but similar developments are taking place in many other places in the world (e.g., Singapore, the Philippines, etc.).

Mainland China became the world leader in the number of megamalls the country had; Disneyland opened in Hong Kong (and is scheduled to open another theme park in Shanghai); and Macau began creating the Cotai Strip with casino-hotels (e.g., the Venetian) that were clones of those on the Las Vegas Strip. Similarly, Dubai began creating three palm islands to be dominated by mega-hotels and condominiums. Palm Jumeirah was the first of the islands to be completed. The Atlantis (a clone of a hotel of the same name in the Bahamas) was the first of nearly a dozen hotels and condominiums to be built on the island. Dubai will also have many shopping malls associated with this development and many hotels are being planned (there is as yet no plan to build a Disneyland there). Macau and Dubai will be dealt with in greater detail below.

This expansion of the cathedrals of consumption throughout the US and in other parts of the world seemed to support the idea that more affluent parts of the world had gone beyond mere consumerism to an era of “hyperconsumption.”[337] Such excesses in consumption often require similarly excessive settings—many of the cathedrals of consumption—in which hyperconsumption can be practiced and encouraged. All seemed to be well with those who wanted to be able to consume to excess and could afford to do so (and many more in the last decade were able to do so), those who owned and operated the cathedrals of consumption, and those who profited in various ways from both hyperconsumption and the cathedrals of consumption.

However, just as this expansion was gaining force, it ran headlong into the global recession that began in the US in late 2007 and spread to much of the rest of the world in the following years. There had been a feeling that an economic slump in the United States was less likely to affect much of the rest of the world. It had been thought that many economies, especially the most successful (such as China and the wealthy Arab states), had been largely “decoupled” from the US economy. However, the rapidity with which the economic slump that began in the US globalized and spread around the world, including to the world’s other highly successful economies, indicated the erroneous nature of this thinking.

Indeed, the rapid spread of this slump globally indicated once again the power of the process of globalization and the fact that we live in a “global age.”[338] The definition of globalization to be employed in this analysis is as follows: “globalization is 3 transplanetary process or set of processes involving increasing liquidity and the growing multidirectional flows of people, objects, places and information as well as the structures they encounter and create that are barriers to, or expedite, those flows.”[339] Various terms employed in this definition—processes, flows, liquids, and expediting structures—help us to understand the key issues to be dealt with in this article—the global spread of the cathedrals of consumption, the Great Recession, and the impact of that slump on consumption (as well as hyperconsumption) and the cathedrals of

consumption around the world. Most generally, we will argue that globalization expedited the revolution in consumption in general, and the cathedrals of consumption in particular, and that at the beginning of the second decade of the twenty-first century it may well be expediting the devolution of both.

Most of the economic hardships, especially in the US (and now in most other parts-of the world), caused by the recession—the precipitous drop in home prices, lost jobs, disappearing savings and pensions, the near-demise of the American automobile industry, the near-insolvency of banks, the virtual destruction of the financial giants of Wall Street are well known and have been widely reported and discussed in the news media. Some aspects of the consumption side of this equation have also been discussed frequently, including the cutbacks in consumption because of economic decline and the drying up of credit available to consumers. This essay is devoted to another aspect of the decline in consumption—the fate of the cathedrals of consumption globally in this economic downturn. It is difficult to feel as much sympathy for the plight of hyperconsumers[340] (and the grand cathedrals of consumption) as, for example, for those who have lost their jobs (and homes) and seen their pension funds decline precipitously. Nonetheless, there is an important story to be told here and it is one that will have negative implications for large numbers of people, including more sympathetic figures, such as those throughout the world who are losing, and will lose, jobs (construction, hotel, casino, theme park, and cruise-ship workers, etc.) that owed their existence to hyper-consumption and to the cathedrals of consumption.

The grand narrative here involves a series of changes in consumption that began mainly in the United States after the Second World War and gained increasing momentum over the ensuing sixty-plus years. Over this period of time, these changes became increasingly global. When the window of opportunity for these developments slammed shut, beginning in late 2007, many projects were stopped in their tracks, and the trend toward increasing hyper-consumption and ever more spectacular cathedrals of consumption was aborted, and may be in the process of being reversed. In terms of the cathedrals of consumption, we will see that while this decline and reversal is true for some ongoing projects in the US, it is especially true in other places in the world that are being especially hard hit by the current recession. The

cathedrals of consumption that seemed to so many to be bright symbols of the future of the global economy in general, and of consumption in particular, now increasingly seem like dinosaurs, relics from a previous epoch that is not likely to return, at least in anything approaching the form they reached in the first decade of the twenty-first century. They may even devolve into things that look more like extinct lizards than dinosaurs.

*** The “Invention” and Global Proliferation of the Cathedrals of Consumption

Cathedrals of consumption in general have a long history, as does each of the types that I include under that heading. Historical examples (some of which still exist throughout the world) include market squares, fairs, souks, bazaars, arcades,[341] and amusement parks. However, I am particularly interested in a set of cathedrals of consumption that came into existence in the United States after the close of World War II and especially in the 1950s, although others followed decades later. The American economy, especially its industries, began to boom after the end of the war, at a time when the US had little global competition, with most of its potential competitors decimated by the war. Not only was production booming, but there was also pent-up demand for consumer goods and services that were in short supply during the war, when attention and energies were focused on the production of war materiel.

I am concerned with a wide range of cathedrals of consumption,[342] but four of them will be of particular interest here—casino-hotels, theme parks (especially Disneyland and Disney World), fully enclosed shopping malls (including mega-malls), and cruise ships. These are the most spectacular[343] of the cathedrals of consumption, which means, among other things, that each of them requires a huge initial capital investment. As a result, they need large numbers of visitors willing and able to spend large sums of money. That is, they are highly dependent on the consumer society and culture that developed, at first in the US, along with the emergence of, and later spurred by, the cathedrals of consumption. Thus, they are the ones that are most clearly endangered by the Great Recession and by the massive decline in consumption (and production) that resulted from it.

There are many other cathedrals of consumption and they have had, and will have, a more varied fate during the recession. McDonald's ("invented," at least as a chain, in 1955 by Ray Kroc) and the other fast food chains have fared well largely because they emphasize the low prices that are highly attractive in hard economic times.[344] McDonald's is currently in the midst of an economic renaissance. Discounters (a key event was the creation by Sam Walton of Wal-Mart in 1962 and of Sam's Club in 1983; others include Costco and BJs) have also tended to do well because of their emphasis on low price. The later electronic malls (e.g., Amazon.com, founded in 1994) have also continued to do well, and in some cases have even increased their businesses.

Other cathedrals of consumption have fared more poorly than the most spectacular cathedrals of consumption of concern here. For example, outdoor strip malls have been in decline for decades (in part because they have been outshone by the more spectacular indoor malls) and many superstores (or "big box" stores; arguably the first was the forerunner of Toys "R" Us in 1957) have gone out of business (e.g., Circuit City, Linens'n Things, Sharper Image, Tweeter), or have closed stores (Office Depot).

While there are many different stories to be told about the cathedrals of consumption, our focus here is on the most spectacular of them.

Amusement parks have a long history (Tivoli Gardens in Copenhagen goes back to the early 1800s; Steeplechase Park on New York's Coney Island opened in 1897), but a key event was the opening of Disneyland, and the creation of the modern theme park, in southern California in 1955. It has since spread to Orlando, Florida (1971), as well as becoming a global phenomenon with the opening of Tokyo Disneyland (1983), Disneyland Resort Paris (1992), and, most recently, Hong Kong Disneyland in 2005; there are plans to build another Disneyland in Shanghai, with a scheduled opening in 2014.

The first planned outdoor shopping center was Market Square, which opened in the Chicago suburb of Lake Forest in 1916. Country Club Plaza outside Kansas City followed in 1924. The Highland Park Shopping Village in Dallas

was built in 1931, where, for the first time, storefronts were turned away from the public streets inward into a central area. The first “dumbbell mall” (“two department stores anchoring the ends of an open-air pedestrian mall, set in the middle of acres of parking”)[345] was Northgate, built in Seattle in 1947. However, of greatest importance from the point of view of this analysis is the first fully enclosed indoor mall, Southdale Center, which opened in Edina, Minnesota in 1956. Shopping malls of various types, especially those that are fully enclosed, have long since gone global and are now found in many places throughout the world.

Shopping malls grew larger and larger, with a quantum leap being made with the opening of the mega-malls—West Edmonton Mall in Canada in 1981, followed by the Mall of America in Minneapolis in 1992. Beyond size, what defined the mega-malls was the implosion into them of many other cathedrals of consumption, such as fast food restaurants, multiplex movie theaters, and even amusement parks. Like shopping malls, mega-malls have become a global phenomenon. Indeed, eight of the ten largest mega-malls are nowfound in Asia.[346] The largest by far is the South China Mal! in Dongguan, China,[347] which dwarfs the Canadian and American mega-malls. It has 7.1 million square feet compared to 3.8 million feet at the West Edmonton Mall and 2.8 million feet at the Mall of America’. The South China Mall has 1,500 stores, West Edmonton Mall has 800, and the Mall of America has 520. While most of the world’s largest mega-malls are now in China, others can be found in the Philippines, Dubai, Turkey, Malaysia, Colombia, Thailand, and Brazil. Among the cathedrals of consumption that have imploded into these megamalls are themed zones, ice skating rinks, ski runs, a walk-through aquarium, a 48-story hotel, etc.[348]

Modern cruise ships date back to the late 1800s and had their heyday in the first half of the twentieth century. However, these cruise ships were likely to be about going somewhere, such as back and forth between New York and London or Paris. What defines today’s cruise ships is that they are not about getting anywhere; they usually end up, a week or so later, where they started. This development can be traced to the maiden voyage of the Sunward in Florida on December 19,1966. Caribbean cruises became common and were dominated by cruise lines such as the Princess Line and Carnival (with its “funships”). Today’s versions are behemoths carrying 3,000 or more passengers and imploded into them are casinos,

shopping malls, athletic facilities, fast food restaurants, and much more. However, the biggest cruise ship—the 20-deck-high Royal Caribbean Oasis of the Seas— was launched in late 2009 (to be followed in late 2010 by the similar Allure of the Seas). It can carry 5,400 passengers, and among the other cathedrals of consumption onboard are a Coney Island like (simulated) boardwalk (with a carousel and, of course, lots of shops) and a 700-seat AquaTheater where passengers can watch aquatic entertainment in, of course, the largest pool at sea.[349] Such cruise ships, and cruising itself, have become global, spreading to Alaska, the Mediterranean, major rivers in Europe, the Far East, Australia and New Zealand, the Middle East, and Africa.

A signal event in the history of casino-hotels was the founding by the gangster Benjamin “Bugsy” Siegel of the Flamingo in Las Vegas in 1947. While there were casinos in Las Vegas (and in other places throughout the world, such as Monaco) before this time, this was the first of the increasingly spectacular casino-hotels that came to define Las Vegas, especially its (in) famous Strip. Such casino-hotels later spread to Atlantic City and eventually to many different locales in the US. Such casino-hotels have spread throughout the world, with the most notable location being Macau, long a gambling center, which is witnessing the construction of a humber of casinohotels (e.g., the Venetian) modeled after and owned by their American counterparts. There is (or was until the recent economic downturn) a great deal of interest in Southeast Asia in general in such casino-hotels, with plans afoot for major casino-hotels in Ho Tram (and perhaps on Phu Quoc island) in Vietnam, Manila Bay in the Philippines, and Angkor Wat in Cambodia.[350]

The above tells only a small part of the history of the cathedrals of consumption and their expansion from their largely American roots to become global phenomena. Many of these cathedrals of consumption, either singly or in combination with others in a single locale forming a “landscape of consumption,”[351] have become some of the world’s great tourist destinations. In the early part of the twenty-first century, many parts of the world witnessed this boom and decided that they wanted a piece of the action. Many cathedrals of consumption were built, and the creation of some landscapes of consumption was begun, but they hit a stone wall with the arrival of the recession. Developers and builders in many parts of the world experienced great trouble and many plans were slowed, stopped, or scuttled

altogether. Furthermore, extant cathedrals and landscapes of consumption also ran into great difficulties. This leads us to the next section in which we discuss whether yesterday's cathedrals (and landscapes) of consumption are today's and tomorrow's "dinosaurs of consumption."

*** From Cathedrals to Dinosaurs (in No Time at All)

While the low-cost cathedrals of consumption seem to be weathering the perfect recessionary storm well, the higher-end cathedrals of consumption, especially those that are the costliest to build and to maintain, are experiencing the greatest difficulties. This is certainly clear in the US in general, and in Las Vegas in particular, as the epicenter of the development of the paradigmatic cathedrals and landscapes of consumption. By late 2008, visitor volume to Las Vegas was down 3 percent and gaming revenue was down over 8 percent;[352] in October 2008, revenue was down over 25 percent compared to October 2007; daily room rates were down over 14 percent forthat same period. When one of the great cathedrals of consumption on the Strip—Wynn Las Vegas—opened in 2005, a bargain rate for a room was $250 a night. The month after Encore (an adjacent casino-hotel also built by Steve Wynn) opened, rooms in January 2009 could be had for $159 a night.[353] True to the need to be spectacular, Encore, which cost $2.3 billion to build, is three stories higher than the neighboring Wynn Las Vegas and features the original art of Fernando Botero, a 231-carat pear-cut Wynn diamond, and a nightclub that seats 3,000 people. Such b casino-hotel requires lots of visitors spending and gambling enormous sums of money, and that is going to be much more difficult to achieve in the midst of a deep recession. This has resulted in great economic pain, including a huge budget deficit for the state of Nevada, a drop in new construction by 92 percent from October 2007 to October 2008, a huge decline in housing prices, and a rise in statewide unemployment from a minuscule 0.4 percent to 8 percent in November 2008 (and that was expected to exceed 10 percent within a relatively short period of time).

However, bigger problems confront the new Las Vegas cathedrals of consumption that were planned, and on which construction had begun, or was even well along, before the economy plunged into recession. Construction on the planned $4.8 billion Echelon resort was halted in August 2008, with three of its towers having already reached twelve stories (one was to have been 55 stories high). Other projects (e.g., the Fontainebleau) are on hold. However, some huge projects were too far along and could not be held up or stopped. The nearly $4 billion Cosmopolitan Resort and Casino, a complex of hotels, casinos, and condominiums, was forced to file for bankruptcy. However, the bank that financed it (Deutsche Bank) decided that the project needed to be completed, and the scheduled opening date is now September 2010.

At the same time, an even larger and more spectacular $8.5 billion project, CityCenter, a joint endeavor of MGM Mirage and Dubai World, is being built adjacent to the Cosmopolitan in Las Vegas. A major part of it, including the 4,004-room Aria Resort and Casino, opened in December 2009; the project as a whole will include a number of highrises, including several hotels, casinos, condominiums, residences, and a retail entertainment district under a “crystalline canopy.” It may be the last of the spectacular cathedrals of consumption, and landscapes such as CityCenter that encompass several of them, in Las Vegas, and in the US more generally, for some time to come. Unless the economy recovers far more dramatically in the next few years than is anticipated, it is likely that CityCenter will, at the minimum, face a rocky start.

Thus, with existing Las Vegas casino-hotels confronting a major downturn in business and with others to be completed in the midst of the continuing economic crisis, it may be that many of these cathedrals of consumption should be better seen as dinosaurs of consumption. They are all huge and enormously expensive to build and to maintain. Hotel occupancy needs to be near-capacity and the casino floors must be flooded with gamblers, especially high rollers. However, occupancy rates are down and bettors, even well-heeled ones, are not arriving in great numbers and they tend not to be wagering as much. The casino-hotels tended to rely on competing with one another in terms of the size of the spectacle they offered, and they passed the cost of the spectacles on to the consumer in terms of higher room rates, higher prices for food, more money spent on goods in shopping malls, and,

most importantly, ever-greater sums lost in the casinos. However, in tough economic times, the casino-hotels have had to resort to something that they have long resisted—competing on the basis of price rather than spectacle.

The above can be seen in light of Baran and Sweezy's theory of "monopoly capital."[354] As Marxists, and writing in the 1960s, Baran and Sweezy focused on production, but their thinking can be applied easily to consumption. In an earlier era of "competitive capitalism," capitalists competed with one another on the basis of price; the ones who offered the lowest prices were able to win out over their competitors. The problem with this is that it served to reduce profits or, in the case of "cutthroat" competition, all but eliminate them. As capitalism rationalized the realization of the self-destructive nature of price competition dawned on an increasing number of capitalists. The focus increasingly shifted to "sales" competition, on beating the competition on the basis of things like advertising and packaging. It was sales techniques such as these that drew in consumers, not low prices. Prices could be kept high while the cost of these sales efforts and mechanisms could be passed on to the consumer. The result was higher profits to the capitalist producer under a regime of sales competition than under a regime of price competition.

The modern, most spectacular cathedrals of consumption came of age in the era of the dominance of sales competition in the production arena, and, as a result, taking their lead from the dominant players in the realm of production, tended to focus on sales rather than price competition. Thus, Las Vegas casinos, cruise ships, fully enclosed shopping malls, and the like tended to concentrate on building bigger, better, and more expensive consumption sites. These massive expenditures were made possible by the belief, and long-time reality, that those costs, no matter how massive, could be passed on to consumers who would willingly pay high prices for the privilege of being "allowed" to consume in such palatial settings. Now, however, these consumption settings, like many of their predecessors, are being forced to rely less on sales competition and to focus more on cutting prices and being competitive in terms of price.

Indeed, not long ago, Las Vegas launched a promotion called "Vegas Right Now," which sought to increase the number of visitors by offering discounted

hotel rooms, tickets to shows, and spa packages. Room prices are down all along the Strip and promotions are rife (a free buffet meal with a room rental; discounted show tickets at the major hotels). This may succeed in bringing more visitors to Las Vegas, but those who come as a result of lower prices are not likely to be the big spenders and high rollers who are required to support the city's massively expensive cathedrals of consumption. The problem is that these cathedrals, built during the heyday of Las Vegas, are fast becoming dinosaurs, ill-suited to survive in this new economic climate. They are simply too big, too expensive, and too costly to operate. If the Great Recession is brief (as I write this, it is in its third year), most or all will survive and perhaps thrive once again. However, if the downturn is severe, at least some of these cathedrals may, indeed, become dinosaurs and follow the "real" dinosaurs into extinction. Especially vulnerable are the ones currently under construction and nearing completion. Where will a sufficient number of the needed tourists, gamblers, and condo purchasers come from? The newer, very expensive casino-hotels (e.g., Encore) will also have great difficulty in this environment. It may be that the ones most likely to survive are the older casino-hotels on the Strip (e.g., Circus Circus or Caesar's Palace) that have long since earned back their capital investments and are in a better position to compe'e on a price basis and still earn a profit. (However, the older they are, the more modest the spectacle, at least in comparison to the newest casino-hotels, and while this is a source of their price advantage, will it attract enough consumers to them and to'Las Vegas as a whole?)

It could be argued that many of these casino-hotels are, like banks and financial institutions such as Citibank, AIG, Fannie Mae, and Freddie Mac, "too big to fail." While the failure of some of these casino-hotels would be catastrophic, especially for Las Vegas and Nevada, it seems unlikely that either the city or the state would have the funds needed to rescue them. It seems even more unlikely that the US government would rescue them; the public uproar over saving such centers of gambling and other "sins"[355] would be enormous.

While the problems are most extreme in Las Vegas, probably because the cathedrals there were, at least until very recently, the most spectacular (and spectacularly expensive), they are also afflicting the other spectacular cathedrals of consumption. Cruise lines are responding by offering low-price promotions; the Disney Cruise Line is allowing children to travel free. Cruise

ships have an advantage because of the perception, or the reality in some cases (if those who cruise do not take expensive add-ons such as side trips at various ports of call), that their package rates are a bargain, or that they at least allow the traveler to have a clearer sense of just what their total costs will be.[356] Nevertheless, many of the most popular cruise ships are huge and must attract thousands of customers every week, at least in season. The ships themselves are expensive and are costly to operate, requiring large crews to handle the large numbers of passengers.

Shopping malls throughout the US (there are about 1,500 of them) and elsewhere have seen declines in the number of customers visiting malls, the amount spent per customer, and the total amount of business. They have responded by offering sales, promotions, and contests. However, malls are plagued by an increasing number of empty shops (a devastating sight in malls that adversely affects the spectacle they are endeavoring to create), and many of these shops are outlets of chains that are retrenching or themselves going out of business.[357] Closed shops mean less revenue to the mall owners and present greater difficulty in surviving. Many malls are themselves in danger of closing, or have already closed (see [[http://www.deadmalls][www.deadmalls]]. com), as a result of the recession. [358] Also contributing to mall closures is the credit crisis associated with the recession and the inability of malls to get needed financing or refinancing. The result is a proliferating number of “dead malls,” such as the Randall Park Mall outside Cleveland, Ohio, which closed in late 2008.[359] However, “big box” malls have been experiencing problems for some time. Part of the reason is that too many of them were built, but they are also losing business to other spectacular shopping sites such as “lifestyle” open-air malls (e.g., Easton Town Center in Columbus, Ohio).[360]

One of the major developers of malls, the MillsCorporation, experienced severe economic difficulties and was taken over in 2007 by Simon Property Group (and the Farallon Capital Management); the company is now called The Mills: A Simon Company. Mills had built a number of the US’s biggest and best-known malls (e.g., Potomac Mills, Ontario Mills), and it had constructed malls elsewhere in the world, including Spain, Scotland, and Canada. At the time of its sale, Mills was building a spectacular new mall—Meadowlands Xanadu—just outside New York City. The project was taken over by a private investment firm. It was originally scheduled for completion in 2007, but the

date has been pushed back until mid-2010 (probably not an opportune time to open such a mall).

Amusement parks, especially the Disney theme parks, may fare better in the current recession than the other cathedrals of consumption discussed here. In part this is due to the fact that Disneyland is such a cultural icon (but Las Vegas is as well, and it is hurting). However, the Disney theme parks, like cruise ships, seem to offer low price (although this often turns out not to be the case when all costs are added up—food, souvenirs, hotels in the park, etc.) through their one-price passes for a one-day or a several-day visit. In addition, many Americans cap drive to one of the US parks, thereby saving on expensive airfares for several family members. More regional amusement parks in the US, such as Cedar Point outside Sandusky, Ohio are, or are perceived to be, even more economical vacation sites (e.g., the drive is shorter), with the result that they are even as more likely to be resistant to the effects of the recession. This is true, as well, of other parks around the globe, such as Tivoli Gardens in Copenhagen, which can be reached by public transportation.

Overall, with the economy in deep recession, almost anything to do with discretionary consumption (a key part of hyperconsumption, if not another term for it) is hurting, undoubtedly far more than the consumption of necessities (e.g., food, gasoline, etc.). Most cathedrals of consumption will survive (especially those that are the most iconic and offer the best value), but others will shrink and some will disappear. If the recession deepens and lengthens into a full-blown depression, then many more will contract or close their doors.

A major factor in this is the overbuilding of many cathedrals of consumption during the explosive growth of the economy in the late twentieth and early twenty-first century. There are just too many chain stores, malls, cruise ships, and casino-hotels. Furthermore, the need to compete led many of them to seek to be ever-more spectacular, at least more spectacular than their major competitors. Many of them have built what are, or may soon be, dinosaurs that either may survive as relics of a previous age or, in some cases, become extinct. While this is true in the US, it is even truer globally, especially in

those locales that got into the game late or are in the midst of building great new cathedrals and landscapes of consumption (see below).

*** The Globalization of the (Potential) Dinosaurs of Consumption

We have already mentioned several examples of the globalization of the cathedrals of consumption. It is well beyond the scope of this essay to deal with this global expansion in any complete way. There are far too many, and too many different, cathedrals of consumption and far too many parts of the world that would need to be covered. Further, accurate and up-to-date information (much of it is proprietary, and there would be a great incentive to limit or block negative data) on all of these cathedrals of consumption in all of these different geographic locales would be nearly impossible to accumulate. In any case, a small number of extreme, or limited,[361] cases will serve to illustrate the issues involved in a far better way than a large number of more diverse, but less extreme, examples. The two examples I have chosen for this section are developments in Macau (like Hong Kong, a special administrative region within China) and Dubai, one of the United Arab Emirates. The basic argument is that these locales have moved aggressively and decisively in the direction of creating cathedrals and landscapes of consumption and that because of their recent (and ongoing) development and massive investment, they will feel the pain (at least in the short run) even more than the extant cathedrals and landscapes of consumption in the US.

Dubai. No global locale demonstrates the globalization of the spectacular landscapes and cathedrals of consumption better than Dubai, especially the Palm Islands (Palm Jumeirah, Palm Jebel Ali, and Palm Deira), being built with sand reclaimed from the sea around Dubai. (Also created was The World, 300 man made islands, some of which sold for between $15 and $45 million.)[362] These are to be the world’s three largest artificial (simulated) islands and the result of the largest land reclamation project ever undertaken. All three are to be shaped, albeit somewhat differently, as palm trees and surrounded with crescents (that also serve as breakwaters). All three are spectacular because of their size (the largest, Palm Deira, is planned to be bigger than Paris) and the way in which they

were, and are being, created (massive and unprecedented hauling of sand from the desert and dredging it from the bottom of the Persian Gulf).

- Altogether the Palm Islands will add over 500 kilometers of beaches to Dubai.

- Over 100 million cubic meters of sand and rock each were required to form Palm Jumeirah and Palm Jebel Ali.

- These are tiny in comparison to Palm Deira, which will require one billion cubic meters of sand and rock.It will dwarf Palm Jumeirah, already the largest man made island in the world.

Of course, the developers are not content with the spectacle of the islands themselves, but they are to have luxury hotels, theme parks, shopping malls, and the like. In other words, each will be a distinct landscape of consumption. To allow people to get from the mainland to Palm Jumeirah, a monorail (Las Vegas has such a monorail) is being built between Gateway Station on the island and the Atlantis Station on the crescent of the island. There will also be a 300-meter bridge to the island, as well as a tunnel under the sea to its crescent.

This massive project was undertaken in spite of clear dangers and risks. For example, no one knows how well the construction will wear overtime and whether it can survive the hoped-for massive influx of visitors. In addition, it is not clear how the development, and the huge amount of dredging that was needed, will affect the ecology of the area. It is also not clear how much the project will cost, but given the magnitude of work involved in creating the islands, the costs will be astronomical.

Palm Jumeirah is the furthest along, but the others are under construction as well. There are elaborate plans for each, but it remains to be seen how quickly they will be completed and how much of the plans will be fulfilled in the current economic downturn. The Atlantis Hotel opened in late 2008 on

Palm Jumeirah, and a number of other hotels, residences, etc., are under construction or are planned (although many are already delayed;[363] we will need to see how many are actually completed and/or will survive). Among them are the following: Fairmont Palm Hotel, Tiara Palm Jumeirah, Jumeirah Al Fattan Palm Resort, Grandeur Residences, Kempinski Hotel Emerald Palace, Kingdom of Sheba, Royal Amwaj, Taj Exotica Resort & Spa, and Trump International Hotel and Tower. Beyond the shopping available at the hotels, there will be an outdoor shopping street—The Golden Mile—and a giant indoor mall aptly named Luxury Mall. And there will be a simulated version of an early cathedral of consumption, a souk, a “traditional” Middle Eastern bazaar where: “Meandering paths lead visitors through a bazaar-like atmosphere in which open-fronted shops and intimate galleries spill into paved walkways.”[364] It will include 75 boutique shops and 23 cafes, bars, and restaurants, all on the waterfront. It will have a 442-seat theater and even air-conditioned walkways to help visitors continue to shop in spite of the often extreme desert heat.

To add to the spectacle, two F-100 Super Sabre jets were sunk off the coast of Palm Jumeirah. They are to create an artificial reef so that divers can enjoy the marine life that will congregate in and around them. In mid-2007, the one-time flagship of the Cunard line, HMS Queen Elizabeth 2, was purchased so that it can be refurbished and serve as a floating hotel off Palm Jumeirah. The QE2 is, of course, itself an older cathedral of consumption, but it will now just be one of many on and off the coast of Dubai.

Macau. Macau, an island off the tip of China, has been a center of gambling since the 1850s. In more recent years, the giantfirmsfrom Las Vegas have moved in and built branded casino-hotels there. They have built copies (simulations)[365] of Las Vegas casino-hotels in the older casino-hotel area of Macau, including the Sands Macau, MGM Grand Macau, and the Wynn Macau.

More recently, these corporations have been moving in the direction of the fjrther “Las Vegasification” of Macau by developing a “Strip” there (a landscape of consumption, which, by definition, encompasses two or more cathedrals of consumption), the Cotai Strip, which is designed not only to

resemble (to simulate), but also to rival the Las Vegas Strip. The US-based Sands Corporation (the name comes from one of Las Vegas's early and legendary cathedrals of consumption, imploded in 1999 to make way for the Venetian) owns, and is building, casino-hotels on the Cotai Strip. The casino-hotels in Macau, especially on the Strip, are themselves simulations of the "originals" in Las Vegas, and none is a better example of this than the Venetian (owned by the Sands Corporation), which opened in August 2008. [366] It is a simulation of a simulation (the "original" Venetian in Las Vegas), which itself is a simulation of Venice, Italy. Like its forerunner, the Macau Venetian has a Cirque de Soleil arena and show—ZAIA (Cirque de Soleil has also simulated its shows in many locations). The Venetian Macau also reflects the importance of time and space in creating spectacular simulations. Like its counterpart in Las Vegas, it seeks to resemble and embed itself in old Venice. Like all Vegas-style casino-hotels, it emphasizes its size. The fact that it is the largest building (10.5 million square feet) in Asia says it all. (The tallest building in the world—the Burj Khalifa—opened in Dubai in early 2010.) Beyond that, it has 3,000 guest rooms (all suites), more than thirty restaurants, and has 1.2 million square feet for conventions and meetings. It also claims to have the world's largest casino, with 3,000 slot machines and 750 gambling tables. And it illustrates implosion in that it encompasses both a large (one million square feet) shopping mall (Grand Canal Shoppes) with over 350 shops and the 15,000-seat Cotai Arena.[367]

A number of other major casino-hotels have been built (MGM Grand Macau opened in December 2007) or are planned for the Cotai Strip (one by Wynn Resorts). However, with the recent economic downturn, construction of casino-hotels has been halted, further building plans have been put on hold, and construction workers and casino-hotel employees have been laid off.

*** The Impact of the Great Recession

The current economic downturn has had a severe impact on not only Macau, but also Dubai, and on their landscapes and cathedrals of consumption. In that, the situation they face resembles the situation confronted by the Cosmopolitan and City Place in Las Vegas. That is, the landscapes and cathedrals of consumption represent huge investments that, at least in part, are coming to fruition in the teeth of a global economic crisis. Not only is

their timing bad, but they also lack many of the characteristics that could have allowed them to succeed in bad times. For example, while cruise lines and Disneyland might succeed by offering, or seeming to offer, low prices, this would be hard for the cathedrals of consumption in Macau and especially Dubai to do. This is true if for no other reason than that they require large numbers of international visitors, and airfares for those living in the developed West and North are apt to be quite high given the distances involved. In the case of Dubai in particular, the costs of development have been enormous, and much of the development is aimed at the rich and the super-rich (especially the World Islands development). Of course, the superrich, even if they have been badly hurt by the recession, may still be able to afford such discretionary consumption, no matter how excessive.

There have already been early signs of trouble in these two locales. In Dubai, the Atlantis on Palm Jumeirah had a $20-million star-studded opening in late 2008, which was highlighted by an over-the-top fireworks display that was probably visible from space. Shortly afterward, Nakheel, the Dubai company that was involved in the development of Palm Jumeirah, laid off 500 people, that is, 15 percent of its global employees. Said a Lebanese businessman, “The people with Nakheel spend $20 million on fireworks and don’t have money to pay their own people ... It’s a disaster.”[368]

More importantly, by late 2009, Dubai World, the state-owned company that was behind the development of the Palms, announced that it was unable to make payments due on its estimated $60-$100 billion in debt. It said it was negotiating with its creditors for at least a six-month extension, and would probably need much more time than that. Many, if not all, of its cathedrals of consumption are in trouble and their current value is likely much less than what is owed on each of them. They are, in the parlance of the ongoing mortgage crisis in the US, “underwater.” More generally, as the crisis in Dubai unfolds, it may be possible to think of it as an entire landscape of consumption that has acquired the dubious status of perhaps being the largest dinosaur in a world of consumption increasingly characterized by them.

What makes the Dubai situation even more troubling is the fact that Dubai World is deeply involved in many other global investments, including some of

the other dinosaurs of consumption discussed here. Thus, it is partners with the MGM Mirage in the likely-to-be-troubled CityCenter development in Las Vegas. And the linkages grow more troubling when we see that the MGM Mirage is not only itself in difficulty, but also deeply involved in the Cotai Strip in Macau.

In Macau, a number of construction projects have been halted or put on hold. This is closely related to the global economic crisis, but other factors are also in play, such as the fact that China, apparently concerned about the gambling problems of some of its citizens, has restricted travel to Macau through visas that limit visitors to one trip for no longer than seven days in a three-month period.[369] What is especially troubling is the decline, and potential bankruptcy, of the Las Vegas Sands Corporation. In late 2008, the company reported a huge shortfall in its ability to handle fixed charges and it was feared that it would lead to defaults on almost $9 billion in long-term loans.[370] The company's stock price fell from well over $100 a share in late 2007 to being almost valueless in March 2009 (by early 2010, it had recovered to about $17 a share). The corporation is having problems elsewhere in the world, including with the construction of a casino-hotel at Marina Bay in Singapore. Work continues there, buoyed by the fact that the Singapore government considers it "too big to fail" and there is talk of the Singapore Tourism Board taking over much of the Sands' debt in order to complete the project.[371]

Also worth mentioning in this context are the huge Oasis of the Seas and Allure of the Seas cruise ships. Their enormity makes them likely dinosaurs of consumption, especially since their launches in late 2009 and in late 2010 are occurring, and will occur, in the midst of the continuing global recession that, as we have seen, is already wreaking havoc in Las Vegas, Dubai, Macau, and many other locales thick with cathedrals (or dinosaurs) of consumption. Just as it is hard to fill the hotel rooms in these settings, it is likely to be extremely difficult to fill the staterooms in these new cruise ships.

*** The Not So Creative Destruction of Stillborn Cathedrals of Consumption

What we are now witnessing in the realm of consumption, as well as in the larger economy, is another of the economic “gales” that were the focus of the work of Joseph Schumpeter.[372] What defines capitalism for Schumpeter is a process of “creative destruction” where new economic structures are created and the old are destroyed in order to make room for them. Schumpeter, of course, was focusing on production (e.g., manufacturing plants), but much the same argument can be made about consumption (and, say, shopping malls).

It is one thing for extant cathedrals of consumption, especially those that have been in existence for some time, to be destroyed (in the name of creative destruction), but it is quite another for those that are in the advanced planning stages, or, even worse, that are well along in their construction. The image conveyed by the theory of creative destruction is of a business that has succeeded for a time but has fallen on hard times and/or has been made increasingly marginal by a variety of changes (e.g., technological, social). While we might fret about the destruction of such a business and the loss of jobs facing its employees, there is at least the consolation that it/they had its/their successes.

While we are witnessing many examples of such classic creative destruction in the current recession (e.g., Circuit City), there are many other cathedrals of consumption that are not being built even though much time, money, and planning have already gone into them (e.g., the Fontainebleau in Las Vegas). Further, there are many that will not be built, or at least will experience dramatic and costly delays (e.g., hotels on Palm Jumeirah and the other Palm Islands in Dubai). However, a much greater problem is created by the structures that have been destroyed during the process of being created or are being completed, even though they face a bleak future (at least immediately) and may face destruction soon after completion. Examples of the cathedrals not being completed are casino-hotels in Las Vegas, such as the Echelon, of which, as was pointed out above, twelve stories of its three towers were completed before construction was halted. Of those that face possible destruction soon after completion (although they may be too big to fail), the leading examples are the Cosmopolitan and City Place in Las Vegas. The same might be the case for some of the hotels under construction on Palm Jumeirah in Dubai.

In these examples, we have no past history of success, as in the case of, say, Circuit City, to soften the blow of failure, no sense that they had their time in the sun but that that time has now past. All we have in these instances is failure (or the great likelihood of failure), and this is a situation that is not considered by the theory of creative destruction and its generally optimistic outlook. If we would like to salvage creative destruction as □ theory (and there is an imperative that we must), we need to do so by taking into consideration situations such as these, as well as the global dimension discussed below. Creative destruction may have relevance to the contemporary economic situation, but it is not salvageable without a major overhaul.

*** From Global Revolution to Global Devolution?

The rise of hyperconsumption and the cathedrals of consumption in the decades after World War II can be seen as a revolution. However, it could be argued that what we are now seeing is a devolution. On the one hand, this could mean a return to a less frenetic level of consumption. On the other hand, it may mean not only a decline of the modern cathedrals of consumption, but perhaps also the return of early modern, or even pre-modern, small shops and shopkeepers. Such a coexistence ofthe modern with the early modern or the pre-modern is often seen as one ofthe hallmarks ofthe postmodern.[373]

The revolution-devolution pairing is comparable to, and has some similarities with, Jean Baudrillard’s postmodern pairing ofthe modern idea of explosion with the postmodern idea of implosion.[374] The implication is that we may be on the cusp of a postmodern era in which hyperconsumption (especially for the wealthy) coexists with less frantic forms of consumption and modern cathedrals of consumption coexist with, and may even be replaced by, early modern or pre-modern consumption settings.

The warning signs of devolution are everywhere. Of particular interest are not only the cathedrals of consumption that have already disappeared but

also those that may soon join them. Among those that have the potential to disappear in 2010 are the Rite Aid chain of pharmacies (with almost 5,000 stores and 100,000 employees), Blockbuster (a video-rental chain with about 60,000 employees), Sbarro (a pizza chain with over 1,000 stores and 5,500 employees), Six Flags (an operator of a chain of twenty theme parks), and

Station Casinos (which operates fifteen casinos off the Strip in Las Vegas and employs 14,000 people).[375]

All of these, of course, are American cathedrals of consumption, and it is there that devolution is likely to be the greatest because it is in the US that the revolution in this domain started and reached its peak. Having risen far, the fall may well be great and have devastating consequences. Globally, however, we may witness devolution while the revolution is still in its infancy. This best describes the situation facing the casinos on the Cotai Strip and the hotels under construction on Palm Jumeirah. Here we may well see a decline before a rise: devolution before revolution. This all sounds eerily postmodern.

*** Conclusion

Many of yesterday’s cathedrals of consumption look like tomorrow’s dinosaurs of consumption. While many extant cathedrals of consumption have closed or will do so in the coming months and years, much depends on the length and severity of the Great Recession. However long and severe it is, it is clear that in this realm, as well as in the economy in general, we have seen an epidemic of “irrational exuberance” (Dubai is an extreme example of this). Too many cathedrals of consumption were built, and many of those were much too big and much too expensive. However, the greatest problems will be reserved to those who entered the game too late and were too ambitious, including the Cosmopolitan and City Place in Las Vegas, the Palm Islands in Dubai, the Cotai Strip in Macau, and the Oasis of the Seas and the Allure of the Seas. All of these projects are likely to experience great distress in the near future. While some projects will slow down and others will not be built, many of those under construction may well be considered too big to fail by local and national governments, banks, or large corporations. Many may be completed with help from the

latter entities, but completion is one thing, survival is another. Once built, these cathedrals and landscapes of consumption require large influxes of people and especially of money. If the recession/depression lengthens and deepens, the people and the money will not materialize and at least some of the cathedrals/landscapes may fail, or at least be postponed or scaled back, no matter how much money other entities are willing to pour into them.

All of this also serves to illustrate the nature and scope of globalization in general, as well as the specific definition employed above. A few decades ago, consumerism, hyperconsumption, and cathedrals of consumption, all with origins in the US, flowed easily around the world and made their way into many parts of the globe. Beginning in late 2007, the recession, also with its origins in the US, cascaded around the world with great rapidity, putting the lie to the idea that other global economies had decoupled themselves from the US economy. It is clear that virtually the entire global economy has been affected by negative economic flows. This essay has sought to show, by focusing on paradigmatic cases in Dubai and Macau, how consumption in general, and the cathedrals of consumption in particular, have been adversely affected by these flows.

However, the implications of globalization for all of this go far deeper. For example, in light of globalization, we can now see that America's dominance of the world economically for more than a half century after the end of World War II was unique and unsustainable. It was only a matter of time until many other past (in Europe) and future (Japan, China, India, Brazil) global powers would assert themselves and achieve what was, in many ways, their "rightful" place in the global economy. If that turns out to be what we are currently witnessing, then the US economy will retreat relative to these economies and perhaps even in some absolute sense as well. In that case, hyperconsumption and the cathedrals of consumption (as well as much of the rest of the economy) in the US will be in retreat, but other parts of the world can be expected to emerge as global centers of consumption and of the cathedrals of consumption. China would be a likely possibility to replace the US as the leader here, and, in fact, before the current downturn China was already moving in that direction. In this scenario, we would not so much see a decline in hyperconsumption and the cathedrals of consumption, but a shift in their global distribution and in where they will be concentrated.

Whatever the future, we are witnessing the creative destruction of at least some cathedrals of consumption. Once again, however, we need to look at this entire process in the context of globalization. Schumpeter wrote long before the current “global age,” with the result that his theory of creative destruction focused only on what had transpired within a given country. Thus, his image was, for example, of a factory closing in the Midwest but being replaced by a newer and more efficient one in the South. From the perspective of the US, this could be seen as a rather benign process since the country as a whole lost nothing and may even have gained by such creative destruction. However, in the era of globalization, it is likely the case that that which is new and more efficient might well be created in some other, very distant part of the world. A factory that closes in Michigan and is replaced by a new factory in Vietnam represents a significant loss to the American economy (although it is a huge gain for Vietnam). Thus, in the era of globalization, creative destruction is not such a welcome process, at least for some of the companies and nations involved.

We might see this repeated in the case of the cathedrals of consumption. For example, one could conceive of a circumstance in which much of the Las Vegas Strip is decimated by a prolonged depression and/or a dramatic shift in the global economy away from the US. In that case, it might be that the Cotai Strip in Macau becomes the world’s main landscape of consumption as far as gambling is concerned and comes to be populated by the most spectacular casino-hotels. This is made much more likely by another global change—the global airline business—which makes it possible for gamblers from all over the world, including from the US, to get tc Macau more easily and inexpensively. Furthermore, if the global economic center of gravity is indeed shifting to China, India, and Southeast Asia, then it makes sense for Macau to replace Las Vegas as the paradigmatic landscape of consumption, at least as far as gambling is concerned. However, this is not a benign process of creative destruction, at least from the perspective of the US. The decline of the Las Vegas Strip would be an economic disaster for the city of Las Vegas, the state of Nevada, and perhaps even the US as a whole.

However, it is also possible that many of the dinosaurs of consumption (like the hotel-casinos on the Las Vegas Strip) will not go quietly or at all, nor will

the (hyper-)consumerism that fueled them. Americans, and many others, have lived through a half century of unprecedented consumer excess. While that is not likely to return any time soon, the memory of that lifestyle is not going to fade quickly or easily. The history of capitalist economies is, as Karl Marx demonstrated long ago, defined by periods of “boom and bust.” There is no reason to assume that this bust is any different; it will be followed (although no one knows how long it will take) by another boom. That boom, when it occurs, will likely be accompanied by a resurgence of consumerism and of the cathedrals and landscapes of consumption. However, if and when this occurs, neither is likely to be as excessive as it has been in the recent past, nor will it necessarily take place, or be found, in the same locales in the world.

[336] George Ritzer. Enchanting a Disenchanted World: Revolutionizing the Means of Consumption. Thousand Oaks, CA: Pine Forge Press, 1999; 2nd edition published in 2005, 3rd edition published in 2010.

[337] Defined as consuming more than one needs, wants, and/or can afford.

[338] Martin Albrow. The Global Age: State and Society Beyond Modernity. Cambridge, UK: Polity Press, 1996.

[339] George Ritzer. Globalization: A Basic Text. Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010.

[340] Anne D’Innocenzio, “The Wealthy Feel a Pinch in the Designer Wallets,” Sarasota Herald Tribune, December 23, 2008:lD, 3D.

[341] Walter Benjamin. The Arcades Project. Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 1999.

[342] See Ritzer, Enchanting a Disenchanted World: Revolutionizing the Means of Consumption for a more complete iteration of the cathedrals of consumption.

[343] Guy Debord. The Society of the Spectacle. New York: Zone Books, 1967/1994.

[344] Andrew Martin, “The Happiest Meal: Hot Profits,” New York Times-Sunday Business, January 11, 2009: 1, 8.

[345] Margaret Crawford. “The World in a Shopping Mall.” In Michael Sorkin, ed. Variations on a Theme Park: The New American City and the End of Public Space. New York: Hill and Wang, 1992: 20.

[346] [[http://www.forbes.com/business/2007/01/09/malls-world-largest-biz-cx_tvr_0109malls.ht][www.forbes.com/business/2007/01/09/malls-world-largest-biz-cx_tvr_0109malls.ht]]

[347] [[http://www.theseoultimes.com/ST/db/read][www.theseoultimes.com/ST/db/read]] php?idx=1962

[348] [[http://www.easternct.edu/depts/amerst/MallsWorlci.htm] [www.easternct.edu/depts/amerst/MallsWorlci.htm]]

[349] [[http://www.cruisemates.com/articles/feature/OasisPreview-061908] [www.cruisemates.com/articles/feature/OasisPreview-061908]] cfm

[350] http://asia.a@zcasino.eu

[351] George Ritzer. Enchanting a Disenchanted World: Revolutionizing the Means of Consumption, 3rd ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Pine Forge Press, 2010:151–85.

[352] T. R. Witcher, “The Good Times Stop Rolling: Vegas Meets the Recession,” Time, December 29, 2008; [[http://www.time.com/time/business/article/O,8599,1868932,00.html] [www.time.com/time/business/article/O,8599,1868932,00.html]]

[353] Ashley Powers, “Recession Tests Las Vegas Bet on Luxury’s Lure,” Seattle Times, December 28, 2008; [[http://seattletimes.nwsource.com/html/travel/2008560966_vegas26.html] [http://seattletimes.nwsource.com/html/travel/2008560966_vegas26.html]]

[354] Paul A. Baran and Paul M. Sweezy. Monopoly Capital: An Essay on the American Economic and Social Order. New York: Monthly Review Press, 1966.

[355] Adding to its difficulties is the fact that in recent years, after flirting with being more family odented, Las Vegas is returning (if it had ever changed) to its more sinful image and ways. Tiie recent slogan “What happens in Vegas stays in Vegas” is a reflection of this regression.

[356] One of the attractions of the cruise is its highly McDonaldized character. Predictability (e .g., of the cost) is a key aspect of McDonaldization. See George Ritzer. The McDonaldization of Society 5. Thousand Oaks, CA: Pine Forge Press, 2008.

[357] [[http://cannmoney.printthis.clickability.com/pt/cpt?action=cpt&title-dead+stores+and+mall][http://cannmoney.printthis.clickability.com/pt/cpt?action=cpt&title-dead+stores+and+mall]]

[358] David Segal, “Our Love Affair with Mails Is on the Rocks,” New York Times, January 31, 2008: 1 Businessff.

[359] http://cnnmoney.printthis.clickabi!ity.com/pt/cpt?action=cpt&title=Credit+crisis%2C+spec

[360] George Ritzer. Enchanting a Disenchanted World: Revolutionizing the Means of Consumption, 3rd ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Pine Forge Press, 2010: 165–70.

[361] Michel Foucault has written about limit experiences, as Giorgio Agamben.

[362] [[http://www.ameinfo.com/133896.html][www.ameinfo.com/133896.html]]

[363] Delays in many projected completion dates would not be surprising.

[364] [[http://www.madinatjumeirah.com/shopping][www.madinatjumeirah.com/shopping]]; retrieved December 24, 2008.

[365] Actually, they are simulations of simulations: second- (or third-) order simulations. The Venetian in Macau is a simulation of the “original” Venetian in Las Vegas, which, of course, is a simulation of the “real” Venice in Italy (itself now largely a simulation created for tourists).

[366] USATODAY.com June 19, 2007; retrieved December 23, 2008.

[367] [[http://www.venetianmacau.com/en][www.venetianmacau.com/en]]; retrieved December 23, 2008.

[368] Christopher Dickey, “Financial Paradise Becomes a MIRAGE,” Newsweek, December 15,2008:46.

[369] Mark McDonald, “Chinese Officials Gamble, and Their Luck Runs Out,” New York Times, January 15, 2009: A10.

[370] [[http://www.time.com/time/printout/0,8816,1857376,00.html] [www.time.com/time/printout/0,8816,1857376,00.html]]

[371] [[http://www.time.com/time/printout/0,8816,1857376,00.html] [www.time.com/time/printout/0,8816,1857376,00.html]]

[372] Joseph Schumpeter. Capitalism, Socialism, and Democracy, 2nd ed. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1947.

[373] George Ritzer. Postmodern Social Theory. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1997.

[374] Jean Baudrillard. Simulations. New York: Semiotext(e), 1983: 57.

[375] [[http://www.finance.yahoo.com/news/15-Companies-That-Might-Not-usnews-14279875.html][www.finance.yahoo.com/news/15-Companies-That-Might-Not-usnews-14279875.html]].

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** The Arab World, the Global Moment and the Struggle over Reoresentation

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This article is concerned with the nature and impact of the current moment of globalization in and on the Arab world in particular and the Islamic world more generally. How has this global moment materialized in the lives and trajectories of the peoples and nations of the region? What are the modalities and striations of the current global moment for this part of the world, and what risks and challenges does it hold? I say the “global moment” to index the simultaneously synchronic and diachronic character of the dynamic of globalization as we experience it at this point in the history of the planet. This moment is undoubtedly one that is global: the connectivity between decisions, actions, and processes in any one place palpably impacts those in other places, reverberates in geographically distant lives, surfaces within everyday spaces and quotidian routines, and has become a constituent even of everyday subjectivities, though not without contest or challenge. At the same time, to talk of this “global moment” is to note that it is a point of conjuncture, and not an endpoint, or a necessarily stable condition: the nature of the interconnectedness is, in the end, transformable, and it may be transformed through its own dynamics. There is nothing given and fated about the global moment and its configuration. Indeed, this idea is itself one of the sites of the struggle over representation.

Those who have engaged in the debate over “globalization” have disagreed as to whether this is a new old order or a distinctly new one (Wallerstein 1995, 2003; Giddens 2000; Held et al. 1999. See also Clark 1997 for a brief summary). Nevertheless, whatever- side of this debate one takes, the complex cluster of processes, dynamics, and connections that we call globalization necessarily builds on, and takes off from, an already constituted world system, one produced through a set of dynamics and interconnections that shaped and manifested themselves as a world system, one that has increasingly incorporated locales across the globe, either subsuming them or being in conflict with them. No global order (or system) can emerge pristine out of a vacuum. Whether the re-articulations produced by the dynamics of social and political relationships within the pre-existing world system have produced something distinctly new, or have simply manifested an old order of relationships in new ways, it nevertheless remains important to trace the ways the old and the new in the global order work

together, or articulate in relation to each other, in order to understand the potential long-term dynamics and horizons that we face.

I want to suggest that what has been happening in the Arab world, and the unfolding of the global moment in this region, has been central to the very constitution of the current shape of the global order, and that the struggle over representation is itself an integral feature of this process. In doing so, I want to address the intersection between the symbolic and the material, for it is in this nexus that the nature and the ramifications of the global moment can be seriously understood. In this frame, a careful assessment of the current global order would suggest that it is both a retrenchment and an extension, though a markedly distinctive extension, of the global order ushered in at the end of the fifteenth century with the beginning of the conquest of the Americas—the colonial global order, or, as some describe it, the modern colonial world system (Grosfoguel and Cervantes-Rodriguez 2002), which began to take root manifestly after 1492 and ultimately tied in the various continents together in a conjoint dynamic that is still accelerating and yet, in some significant respects, also transmuting.

*** Globalization and Violence in the Contemporary World Order

The term “globalization” today, in its minimal usage, is used to refer to a system of interrelationships between regions and territories, places and settings, actors and actions, marked by massively increased velocity, intensity, reach, and impact {He\d et al. 1999). Too often this is what in the popular, and sometimes even academic, imagination is taken to identify what globalization is. But, of course, this is only a formal description, one that only renders the scope of the moment, and of its trajectories, and the level of its energy, and so potentially renders the scope and the scale of the benefits or the damages potentially embedded in it. It offers an understanding only of the instrumental logics of the processes. It is, however, a description that does not by itself render the substantive logics that drive it, or the constitutive connections that lie at the heart of the actually existing order, nor thus of the character ofthe relationships between actors within it.

In looking at the Arab world, then, I wish to locate particular substantive logics and constitutive vectors at work in this global moment that serve to diagnose its features. Here I want to talk about a feature of the current processes of globalization, and the dynamics of the world system in which they are embedded, that has received too little attention: this is the multimodal “violence” embedded in, engendered by, and connected with these processes. I want to address the inter-braided logics of violence, and of the discursive regimes that intermesh or intersect with it, sustain and subtend it (including the particular deployments and invocations of international law that have operated at the interstate level). That is to say, I will talk about the war against bodied life (what Achille Mbembe [2003] calls necropolises)[376] and the accompanying politics of representation. What I have to say is applicable more widely to the Islamic region in general, but as a substantive logic, it also necessarily reshapes and transmutes trajectories and horizons across the globe, including in the countries of the North itself. [377]

It is no secret that today the processes of globalization extend on, and amplify in a massive way the economic reach of the already dominant countries in the world system, and the transnational corporations that are a fundamental component of their present economies. These are the countries that were enabled by the massive and brutal processes of capital accumulation after the conquests of the Americas, and then further in the subsequent colonial wave of the nineteenth century. The current cycle of globalization involves huge financial flows and trans-border capital investments, greatly facilitated by the new information and communication technologies (ICTs), and is thus marked by the economic expansion and penetration of the capitalist market into almost every region of the world, with all the dislocations that that has brought to various communities (even as it may have brought jobs and opportunities for certain sectors within them). In other words, this has meant the increasing incorporation of various locales into the dominant economic system (the capitalist world market) and under the umbrella of the dominant economies, though this incorporation has had various localized manifestations in different regions. This has been accompanied by a massive thrust for deregulation under neoliberaiism, which began in the 1980s. Both the need to push, or even force, deregulation on sometimes recalcitrant states or regions, as well as the dislocation

produced by privatization and the entry of an externally generated “free market” economy in various locales, and the conditions imposed sometimes by international financial institutions, have produced various modes of violence. Such violence is often manifested in, and is responsive to, increased impoverishment, and it is often consequent ; on increased competition over resources and thus productive of zones of fragmentation whose continued salience is further enabled by the operations of the global market, and the politics invested in that.[378] As noted by Richard Devetak: “More than simply reproducing material inequality between the global North and South, many of the neoliberal reforms ushered in under the “Washington consensus” have fuelled or exacerbated violent conflict in the South” (2008: 8).

“Violence” has been both fuel and waste product of the current cycle of globalization. Where the earlier cycles of global integration in the shape of colonial conquest seem, from the standpoint of a critical present, more visibly and explicitly violent in their operation (conquest, slavery, genocidal and exterminatory campaigns), the current cycle is perhaps more multi-modal, but emerges as no less violent. Indeed, although violence has always been a fundamental element of politics, as actuality or threat, both in interstate relations as well as in sovereign power/populace relations, most forcefully in colonial settings, I want to suggest that there is something particular about its forms and manifestations, as well as its geo-historical location today.

When people talk about the “globalization” or global spread of violence (whether this is pursued in public fora, the media, or academia), too often they are referring to the violence of non-state actors. In this framework, criminal networks, people-smuggling industries, terrorists, anti-state militias, private military firms, pirates, and resistance and national liberation movements tend to be lumped together. The focus is here on the formal aspect: nonstate or sub-state groups using arms, that is, the frame for this “problematic” is the lapse of the state’s monopoly on the means of violence. To focus on this alone, and without discrimination between the different dynamics, agents, contexts, and objects of violence, however, is to take a “statist” perspective, naturalizing the uses of state violence and its dynamics, and/or relegating it to a blind area. It is thus to miss some of the crucial connections between non-state violence and various

modes of (violent) state action, connections crucial to understanding the nature of the global order. Most importantly, it is to miss the fact that by far the bulk of political violence of all kinds implicates state intervention, support or collaboration, covert or overt, and by far most of it implicates some of the more dominant states in the global system and their regional allies.[379] Even overtly, non-political violence can have a complex relationship to state and state-backed action.[380]

It is important, then, to distinguish two facets of “global” violence, that is, two distinct (if variously interrelated) pathways for violence in the “global” arena. One is the global spread and extension of networks that use violence to do their business, or that trade in the currency or instruments of violence. The second is the violence that accompanies, and is part of, the process of globalization itself, understood as the integration of various locales into a single or extended capitalist global order, which is the wider field within which these networks and conduits take shape. Many of the conduits and networks that use violence are either shadowy constituents of the capitalist global economy (such as traffic in human beings, traffic in arms, and traffic in narcotics) or are arguably responses to the various modes of violence emergent from it (such as al Qaeda and other extremist groups that use trans-local violence as a mode of political action). In other words, certain global networks using violence may be viewed as responsive to the violence of the interstate order in the era of globalization. Others are enabled by the global order, inhabit its subterranean spaces, and feed on its tributaries. Yet ethers are direct beneficiaries of various major actors pursuing their own “stakeholder” interests in, and as part of, this order, thereby replicating and reproducing it within various local sites and conduits. Seen in this way, one has to locate the connections between the two—the global spread of networks, and their organized activities and operatives, and the consolidation of a global order with its specific roster of major players and its legitimated/ contested processes and outcomes.

The relationship between various forms of localized political conflict and major players in the global order has been well documented. The Carter Center reports that there have been more than fifty major armed conflicts since the Cold War ended in the late 1980s. According to David Isenberg, “Between 1985 and 1995, the belligerent parties in forty-five conflicts around

the globe obtained $42 billion worth of weapons from the United States. In 90 percent of the fifty most significant conflicts in 1993–94, one or more parties received U.S. weapons or military technology.” (quoted in Lappe, et al, 1998:138). If we look at some of the more recent and most talked about cases of massive political violence in the South, the evidence is that outside states are implicated in various ways, for their own ends, most importantly in the training, arming, and funding of various militias or groups, as they struggle over resources and power. One need list only a few examples here: the Rwanda genocide (Melvern 2004; Human Rights Watch 1994; McGreal 2007); the century-long devastation of Haiti (Hallward 2010; Blumenthal, 2006 and 2007; Wilentz 2004); the military repression in the Pinochet era in Chile; the fighting between Fatah al-lslam and the Lebanese army in Lebanon (Hersh 2006 and 2007); and the intra-Palestinian conflict between Hamas and Fatah in Gaza and the West Bank (Rose 2008; Ackerman 2007). There are many others. This is not to shift moral and political responsibility for such conflicts solely onto outside parties, but rather to place it clearly and unambiguously in its wider global context, a context without which, arguably, many of these developments may not have taken place, or may not have lasted for so long, or may not have been so extreme.[381] When we examine some of the major players who had a “presence” in these various theaters of violence, we see that they are repeatedly the countries whose dominance was enabled bv the massive and brutal processes of capital accumulation, after the conquests of the Americas, and then further in the colonial wave L that followed that in the nineteenth century and early twentieth century and the plunder of the South. Regional allies-and local conduits are, however, IB routinely a necessary condition, so that there is a synergistic set of interests at play that sustain the global order and are sustained by it in these ways.[382]

One significant index of the role played by violence in the continued dominance of the current world order that is worth noting is the increasing legitimation of mercenary work—what is now cal led “private military forces”—and its adoption by states in their official strategies. Where thirty years ago, mercenaries inhabited a rather shadowy ethico-legal world, they have now, after the global neoliberal thrust, come to be officially recognized, protected, and depended on. Blackwater, for example, has been a major player in some of the worst depredations of US violence in Iraq after the invasion;[383] they were also used to police New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina. Such private military forces have increasingly participated “in

military expeditions of the world’s most powerful nations” (Devetak, 2008, p. 21). According to Peter Warren Singer (2002), “every major US military operation in the post-Cold War era (whether in the Persian Gulf, Somalia, Haiti, Zaire, Bosnia or Kosovo) has involved significant and growing levels of PMF support” (p. 188).[384]

One would argue, then, that the global/networked spread of violence (the globalization of violence as a mode of politico-social action) is both a product of a globalizing world order (the violence consequent on globalization)[385] and is itself an instrument of the process of globalization, understood as the process of integration of various production and consumption locales and sites across the globe into the capitalist world market (the violence of globalization). This article focuses on the latter mode, for it is here that one can locate the substantive logic of globalization operative at this moment in the Arab/lslamic region.

*** The Political Geography of Violence

The most significant manifestation of the global moment in the Arab/ Islamic region has been the recurrent, systematic, and systemic production of extreme violence, directly and overtly, by powerful external states. We are increasingly seeing war waged by outside powers (though often with the help or assent of local regimes/allies) that produces catastrophic conditions for entire populations.

Iraq in 1991, according to military analysts, saw more targets hit in one day’s attacks than were hit by the entire Eighth Air Force [of the US] in World War II during the years 1942 and 1943 combined (Deptula 1996: 129). Indeed, Iraq during that war saw the largest number of air attacks on different targets in the shortest period of time in the history of warfare (Deptula 1996:129), with the US using more bombs in six weeks than in any single year in Vietnam (Head 1996:11).[386] Whatever the amount of ordnance dropped on the country, by all accounts massive, it is the kind of ordnance and its consequences that offers a further significant index. Lando (2007; for a brief account see Kutler, May 11, 2007) notes that the 88,000 tons of bombs dropped on the country (some estimate a slightly higher, some a slightly

lower figure) are equivalent to seven Hiroshima-size atomic bombs. The entire civilian infrastructure was devastated, throwing back the Iraqi population into a pre-development level of life, accentuated subsequently by punitive sanctions that blocked essentials—all the way from computers and pencils to medicines and water purification materials—from entering the country (Nagy 2001; Arbuthnot, September 29, 2007). This dovetailed well with the promise made at the time in the US media to throw back the development of Iraq for generations, and James Baker's much quoted threat to bomb Iraq back to "a pre-industrial age."(/Vew York Times, September 4, 1990).[387] Then there was the unforgettable "shock and awe" campaign that launched the war on Iraq in 2003. This was based on the "rapid dominance" military strategy advocated by defense thinker Harlan Ullman of the Pentagon's National Defense University (Ullman et al. 1996), widely covered in the US media on the eve of the war as having an effect "in minutes," somewhat "like the nuclear weapons at Hiroshima." (Chan, January 24, 2003; Chernus, January 17, 2003). According to Klein (2007: 331–2), "more than three hundred and eighty [Tomahawk missiles] were launched in a single day. Between March 20 and May 2, the weeks of "major combat," the US military dropped more than thirty thousand bombs on Iraq, as well as twenty thousand precision guided cruise missiles—67 percent of the total number ever made." A report produced by the Project for Defense Alternatives (Conetta 2003) indicates that the 2003 war saw twice the ratio of civilian casualties to combatant casualties than the 1991 war, and more civilian casualties in total. A broad range of weapons that are deadly for civilian life were used, ranging from napalm and white phosphorus to cluster bombs and depleted uranium, also used heavily in Fallujah in November 2004 to subdue it after its initial resistance in April of that year. Depleted uranium had been used in the first Gulf war.

The early days of the war in Afghanistan saw the use of Daisy Cutters (most iconically in the Tora Bora campaign), which killed entire families. Note the aesthetization of extreme lethality in the naming itself. Afghanistan, like Pakistan and Gaza now, has been totally catastrophized. Today, we continue to hear, almost daily, of the systematic use of drones to take out supposed "terrorists" and al Qaeda members, or Taliban fighters, air strikes that consistently end in the mass deaths of ordinary civilians in their villages, with no visible horizon of an end to this practice, indeed a practice that is repeatedly justified by those who engage in it.[388]

The Israeli war on Lebanon in 2006 involved thirty-three days of deadly shelling from air, sea, and land, followed by a land invasion. During this war, every moving figure became a direct target, including ambulances and civilians fleeing in their cars. No structure was immune, including apartment buildings, hospitals, and schools. UN agencies estimate that between two and three million cluster bombs were dropped on Lebanon, most in the South. Each cluster bomb, on exploding, spews tens of smaller bomblets in a wide area, and is thus one of the deadliest anti-personnel weapons that can be used. Ninety percent of those cluster bombs were dropped on Lebanon in the last seventy-two hours of the war, when a ceasefire was already in the making. UN observers find this puzzling. One million unexploded cluster bombs were left littering the South.[389]

The Israeli war on Gaza, which began on December 27,2008, and continued through January 18, 2009, was even more deadly. It was twenty-two days of constant shelling that involved the visible and unrestrained use of antipersonnel weapons against heavy population centers. Again, a range of lethal, even new, weaponry was deployed: DIME (dense inert metal explosives), white phosphorus, and depleted uranium. But even the circumstances of the war (the prolonged and tight siege on Gaza) conjoined in producing a new lethality, a new orchestration of dying. As Richard Falk, the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Human Rights in the Palestinian Territories, said (January 21, 2009), this may be considered a new form of war crime: the collective bombardment of a people you are also holding prisoner.[390]

If you connect the dots, a horrifying landscape emerges, of powerful states catapulting entire populations into a condition of human abjection. There is a pattern and a logic in this, a lesson to be learnt, if we just consider the violence in itself, outside of its justificatory discourses, its historical antecedents, and the various arguments and counter arguments for its historical needs and strategic accomplishments.

a) It is spectacular. It is meant for the huge panoramic display, a kind of return to the spectacle of sovereign violence that was common in the medieval era. At the same time, note that it is intended to be protected from the microscopic investigation that may be thought of as a feature of modernity, as the media are either kept away or are controlled in their coverage of it.[391] In this we can detect the systematic nature of the violence: the combination of in-depth and broad-spectrum violence, suggesting a strategically engendered and oriented to order of political action in which violence is an integral constituent.

b) It is unconstrained. There are no clear boundaries for targets, means, or even temporal duration. There is, in this sense, a synergistic deployment of various means and of different modes of violence, again suggesting a form of deliberation and intent. The Gaza war came after a year and a half of siege and after two months of total blockade. After the war, the siege, which had amplified and ramified the effects of techno-violence, continued. Gaza has been unable to rebuild, and the population inches closer and closer to an outright catastrophe, barely held at bay by the underground tunnels that have been an object of continuous raids by Israel, under the pretext of stopping arms smuggling. Indeed, the siege is now being monitored, tightened, and enforced by an array of powers, with Egypt building a US-inspired, -designed, and -financed iron wall to block tunnel activity.[392] The cluster bombs dropped in the last seventy-two hours in Lebanon continue to kill, but, more significantly, over the longterm, life in the South could not go back to normal. In a region whose economy was 70 percent dependent on agriculture, the tobacco and olive harvest in particular could barely produce at 25 percent of its capacity in the year after the war, because agricultural (production) space, as well as living space (sometimes inside homes and gardens), was deeply contaminated by the prospect of death or dismemberment. In Iraq, the depleted uranium from 1991 alone produced massive increases in cancer deaths, stillbirths, and birth defects; the radiation in some places is 1,000 times higher than normal; the half-life of depleted uranium is 4.5 billion years. The 2003 war followed ten years of sanctions, as a result of which an estimated half a million children died. Since the 2003 war, reports of abnormally high birth defects, miscarriages, and cancers have been increasing. The “brain drain” problematic appeared in a distinct garb: reportedly the assassination of more than 1,000 Iraqi scientists and thinkers, the very stratum that can relaunch the country on an indigenous path of reconstruction.[393]

c) It is highly diversified, technologized, and inventive, with constant research and development into the ways and means that can produce more lethal and long-term effects. It is thus entirely and fundamentally asymmetric, not only in the present, but also in its future vision and potential. In every war waged in the Arab world in particular, there is always some “new weapon” being tested. In the case of the Israeli wars, there is always talk of some new shipment of more developed weapons to be delivered to Israel from the US, during and after the war, as a reward. That, too, apparently is a feature of the lesson to be inscribed into the consciousness of the targeted populations and other onlookers.

d) It is effectively waged against populations, not military groups, let alone just armies. Even in Iraq, in 1991, where there was a clear army that could have been fought, the Iraqi invasion army in Kuwait, it was fought on the terrain of Iraq, and in Baghdad, with massive and systematic damage to civilian infrastructure, an infrastructure that, not incidentally, had been highly developed. In Iraq, in 2003, the notorious “shock and awe” campaign targeted all kinds of civilian infrastructure. This kind of violence, then, announces clearly, in the words of Derek Gregory (2006), the death of the “civilian.” In the process, it locates specific but entire populations as exceptions.

This kind of violence has visibly targeted the Arab and Islamic region.[394] Not only has it been a constitutive vector in the workings of the current global moment in this region, but it has also been globalized in its deployment and legitimation: tunneled and multiply enabled through big-power resources and resolutions, maneuverings, and forms of collaboration (often adopting the discourse of “international law”). It is both, therefore, an extension and a mutation of the old machinery of violence, that which in the first place shaped the modern global system, and that is coldnial/imperial violence. Colonial/imperial violence has always been massive and unconstrained. It is, by its nature and logic, waged against populations, and involves both extractive and/or annihilative violence.[395]

In this context, it is somewhat disingenuous to stress, as many do, the erosion of the nation-state, the erosion of sovereignty, and the process of de-territorialization as the critical markers of globalization. Indeed, there is something of that, but the logic of the actual process of globalization as it has been unfolding in the present period and in this region has meant not so much the weakening of the nation-state and its sovereignty as much as the reorganization and reconfiguration of sovereignty, the attempt at the redistribution of sovereign rights. It has meant not simply the de- territorialization of various processes and activities, but a conjoint de- territorialization on one end of the equation and an extra-territorialization on the other, an option only available to powerful states and their allies. Some states are enabled to have extra-territorial reach and power, while others are subjected to an erosion, or to a direct unmaking, of sovereignty, or even the right to expect or demand it. All of this is effected in, and through, the actual use and/or threat of violence. That is what we witness in the Arab and Muslim region. We have the emergence of super-sovereignty, if you like, though it tries to bear the sign ofthe "international community" Why now? Why here? Why in such violent mode? This is a time when, though processes of capital accumulation under neoliberalism have been massive, the status ofthe US's economic power is in relative decline in relation to both Europe and Asia, and Europe is also declining relatively as China is rising. In this context, the struggle for control of geo-strategic assets (oil, minerals, water) and the need to remove what one might call ideo-strategic obstacles or nodes—social movements, national liberation movements, independence movements, demands for social justice, movements for cultural "integrity," projects to establish an independent economic base—may become critical. If we map the ideo-strategic nodes onto the geo-strategic assets, we can see how the Arab and Islamic region becomes a hotspot: if is dense with both elements simultaneously. Thus, violence or its threat has necessarily been one of the engines of globalization in this region, understood in this frame as a process that reorganizes the allocation of global economic resources, more one-sidedly than before, conjoined by the attempt to accomplish the redistribution of sovereign rights?[396]

This becomes particularly clear in the discursive regime that has accompanied all this violence, and which embeds the continued threat of violence, as Syria, Iran, and others are all subjected to, and further threatened with, various sorts of extraterritorial power: from sanctions to

actual and/or potential strikes. It is for this reason that it is important to examine the question of representation. The mediations of these kinds of violence, and the discourses that justify, reframe, persuade, and otherwise re-specify them, are an integral feature of these policies of violence, and their outcomes. Representation has always been a central site of cultural struggle and contestation, not because culture is important, though clearly it is, but because it is a struggle over the ways in which we want to think, project, and thus inhabit the world, that is, it is a struggle over the shape of reality and over how we are to engage the linked trajectories of the past, present, and future. I speak of representation here in all its related senses: representation in the sense of depicting, portraying, representing, and defining, the sense most closely associated today with the media, and with cultural expression and discursive figures and deployments; and representation in the sense of giving voice to, making a case for, standing for, advocating the interests of, the sense most closely connected with political democracy, and with legal proceedings—in other words, the sense that is relevant to the idea of justice, equality, and rights.

*** Representation and Violence: The Arab and Islamic Worlds

The Arab world in general and the wider Islamic region in particular over the last decade have been at the heart of an emergent discursive regime, an attempt to effect a major discursive shift focalized around and through the “war on terror.” This shift did not, in fact, begin with 9/11 and with the explicit formulation of the agenda of the war on terror, but rather began to consolidate then, and to subtend practical politics visibly, which in turn further crystallized this discursive regime and enabled, indeed required, new actors to attach to it. Like all discursive regimes, it has its teeth in policy and practices. It attempts to produce a consistent, systematic, globally taken-for-granted displacement, inversion, and mutation of the categories in use in relation to the Arab and Islamic world, ones that motivate, enable, and sanitize the various politics and practices focused on the region. Indeed, one may argue that what is at stake is not only the effecting of particular policies and trajectories in the short term, but no less than the reshaping of subjectivities in the long term, as various actors and parties are interpellated through various discourses and are relocated through and within socio-cultural agendas and aid projects carried into the region by external/ international actors.[397]

In his article “The Politics of Naming/’ which addresses the issue of Darfur in some detail, Mahmood Mamdani writes: “The similarities between Iraq and Darfur are remarkable.” In this he refers to the instruments, the nature of the victims, the scale, and the agents of the conflict. He goes on to ask: “In Iraq[,] it is said to be a cycle of insurgency and counter-insurgency; in Darfur, it is called fgenocide. Why the difference? Who does the naming? Who is being named? What difference does it make?” He then elaborates on the narrative produced consistently by those advocating interventton in Darfur, and who continue to cry genocide despite the UN having concluded that though there were both crimes against humanity by the state and war crimes by the rebel militias, there was no genocide. What is specific to this discourse, as Mamdani shows, is the depiction that it is a purely ethnic war in which Arabs are intent on exterminating Africans. Yet such a description can only begin to work if you evacuate from the narrative the history of the region and its conflicts, including the overlapping ethnic identities and the long history of intermarriage, and even the multiple uses of the term “Arab” in situ. One can add to Mamdani’s insightful discussion Robert Fisk’s (2007) critique of current mainstream Western media coverage of Iraq, where the bulk of the Iraqi nightmare is now cast in terms of sectarian religious identities, Shiite and Sunni, again gutting politics and history from the narrative and also, of course, excising the occupation itself, which continues to inflict devastation on communities on a daily basis and whose policies, in the first place, officially inscribed confessional (and ethnic) identities into the political system in what had been one of the most secular societies in the region, thus establishing the foundation for such divides, as well as promoting various vested interests attached to them.[398] Instead, a mindless, sectarian, pre-modern essenttalized religious conflict is now projected. Indeed, as Fisk correctly points out, increasingly the tenor and thrust of news coverage and analysis of the entire region comes in these terms, despite multiple and outspoken local voices against such divides, in Lebanon, Iraq, and elsewhere. Effectively, Arabs are consistently not represented in their own (varied) terms, that is, the terms over which they themselves take positions and in which they express their needs and interests, including the various kinds of freedoms they might expect and demand. Not only are their own voices not allowed to communicate directly, that is, they are not allowed self-representation (and self-representation has a critical relationship to “agency”), and are instead represented by others,

but they are also represented and depicted in ways that undermine or deny them the right to fair representation: they are spoken about, but not for.

Such forms of representation within the spaces of global public discourse build on the long Hollywood history of representation of Arabs and Muslims, which Jack G. Shaheen's systematic studies (2001) have so effectively interrogated. It is a discourse that systematically and cumulatively produces the conditions of possibility for intervention, occupation, and violence, now representable as necessary and often in defense of various victimized others (liberating women, protecting local minorities), or in pursuit of various principles (bringing democracy) and/or in self-defense, as in the concept of "preventive war," or in the declaration of an open-ended "war on terror." Significantly, the discourses are often a complex deployment of these various sorts of axes, as with the US invasion of Iraq in 2003. To suggest that this is simply a demonstration of "confusion," a lack of a clear vision, or even evidence for the lack of just cause, is to underestimate the discursive processes and contexts involved. Over and again, in imperial and colonial discourses (as with various Israeli discourses on Palestine) you have precisely such a conjoint articulation of multiple operational "values" or "principles." What this does is address (interpellate) different potential constituencies and help mobilize a wider base of support and/or practice. It is a discourse that attempts to over-determine its own effectiveness.

During the first three months of the second Palestinian Intifada in 2000, large numbers of children and youths were killed by live fire. These were young people going out, often at the end of the school day, to face Israeli tanks with stones at the checkpoints. What was the mainstream Western discourse about this? Not that it was time to end the occupation and move toward a real and genuine peace with security for all, but that Palestinian mothers were sending their kids out to be killed so that they could score a public relations victory against Israel (see DCI/PS, October 27, 2000; also Rabbani 2000).[399] This is not simply a "blame the victim" discourse; it is worse than that for it points its discursive armament at the very heart of the category that most powerfully and profoundly represents the "human" and that "humanizes" even the animal world: motherhood. Palestinians were in this deprived of even the most fundamental quality of the human, or even of a familiar living species: the care of their young. Instead, they were depicted

in a way that dehumanized them and attributed to them an agency that was within the realm of the “alien” and the “monstrous,” undercutting the possibility that they could speak, be heard, or even be spoken for. This is symbolic violence, which intersects with the physical violence in such a way as to invert its figures, and its experiential and causal logic. Columnists asked why these kids were at the checkpoints, suggesting that they would not have been killed if they had been at home. They did not ask why Israeli soldiers were manning checkpoints set up in Palestinian spaces, or why there were checkpoints surrounding towns and villages, or why there was a military occupation in the first place. Indeed, they did not even ask why the soldiers did not simply retreat a little in the face of stone-throwing teenagers and children, instead of shooting to kill. The violence of colonial conquest and occupation is naturalized in this discursive regime, and the responses of the people under occupation, even when they are at the lowest threshold of the use of physical threat (youngsters throwing stones at an occupying army), are constituted and re-presented as a profound transgression of the most basic human norm.[400] You can call this the alchemy of the monstrous. But it circulated across the globe, coming from multiple sources in the advanced centers to the rest of the world. The notable point here is that the very technologies that enable the deployment of enormous military power, and violence, are those that also make possible enormous representational power: the digital information and communications technologies. These technologies are at the heart of the now mega media industries. Ten large (first-tier) transnational media conglomerates, most of whose centers are located in the West, control most of the world’s media (McChesney 2008). A few news agencies supply stories to newspapers around the world, because many local news outlets do not have their own correspondents. As a result, the same frames of perception and narration get distributed globally (Paterson 2005;1998).

Such modes of representation are enabled, and sustained, through practices of radical inversion and displacement, evident in the modes of naming and classification, the production of narratives of cause and effect, the practices of elision and de-linkage in account construction, and the deployment of specific contextual framings, or even the excision of context. There were the tortuous attempts to redefine “torture” by members of the Bush administration in such a manner as to enable various forms of torture, despite the fact that, and because, the right not to be tortured is considered an absolutely non-derogable right in human rights law. There was the coining

of the term “enemy combatant,” which was used to justify the transportation (kidnapping) of persons with no clear charges against them into a legal noman’s space in the prisons of rendition, the dark holes dotted across Europe and various countries in Africa and Asia, to be tortured and interrogated, sometimes to disappear entirely (Hajjar 2009). This was used to circumvent the classifications and requirements of the Geneva Conventions. Then there was the endless talk of the “kidnapping” of an Israeli soldier serving actively in an army of occupation, by members of the people under occupation, an act that by standard norms of conflict could be easily classifiable as the taking of “a prisoner of war,” or at least as an act of resistance,[401] but little was said of the arrest of dozens of elected Palestinian members of parliament and ministers, many directly from their homes.[402] On the Pope’s visit to Israel in May 2009, he was asked by his Israeli hosts to meet with the family of the Israeli soldier Gilead Shalit, and he did. There was no such equivalent meeting with Palestinian parents, some of whom have all their sons incarcerated in different Israeli prisons. In pointing out these particulars, the intention is not to provide a catalogue of transgressions and injuries, nor even just to point out the radical disequilibrium involved in such discourses and representations. It is rather, and more importantly, to locate the kind of representational landscape that has been constructed and that is established as the scene for the inscription of various forms of political and military action. This landscape naturalizes the fundamental and systematic disequilibrium of policies and the asymmetric metrics of perception and assessment used in relation to the region. It embodies and embeds a particular logic in action, a colonio-logic, inscribed into the conjoint and inter-braided practices of violent political action and disempowering (or denaturing) representational practice.

By a similar logic of “inversion” and excision, the discourse about Iraq was at one time replete with references to “foreign fighters,” but it referred to those people from the Arab world who volunteered to go and fight the invasion forces. It was not used to describe the foreign mercenaries, or the regular troops who had occupied Iraq, reduced its infrastructure to rubble, and taken control of its resources. In fact, foreign mercenaries, most notably Blackwater employees, who were making huge sums of money, paid for by the US administration, to come and kill Iraqis in their own country, were termed “contractors” and were given immunity from prosecution. This representational regime produces an optic of inversion through which every

new event comes to be perceived. Thus, every act of colonial violence begins to be constituted as “retaliation” or “self-defense,” the very terms in which the mass destruction in Lebanon in 2006 and the mass destruction in Gaza in December 2008-January 2009 were both constituted. One of the most telling shifts in all this is the way in which the concept of “civilian” has been explicitly reworked in such discourse. During the 2006 war on Lebanon, for example, the well-known Harvard Law School professor Alan Dershowitz, in an elaborate apologia for Israeli war practice, re-specified the notion of the civilian, so that, as he put it, people should think of it as a continuum:

<quote>

On one end are: the pure innocents—babies, hostages and others completely uninvolved; at the more combatant end are civilians who willingly harbor terrorists, provide material resources and serve as human shields; in the middle are those who support the terrorists politically or spiritually. (Dershowitz, 2006).

</quote>

Indeed, during the Lebanon war, Israel’s justice minister called for villages to be “flattened” in the South, declaring that all the people who remained there —men, women, and children—were “terrorists who are related in some way to Hezbollah.” (BBC News, July 27, 2006). The Israeli discourse throughout the war on Gaza in December 2008-January 2009 was that Israel was using all its weapons in accord with international law, that wherever they shelled and bombed, including the UNRWA (United Nations Relief and Works Agency) school, it was because they had been fired on, and that if civilians were killed it was because Hamas was using them as human shields. What one locates here is a discursive structure suggesting that a war, fought with overwhelming force, over the towns, dwellings, and villages of another people, can be re-articulated as self-defense, notwithstanding visible and massive civilian deaths. What we have is a performative redefinition (in the .■& sense developed by J. L. Austin) of the precepts and principles of international humanitarian law.

Such a representational landscape, and the regime that maintains and polices it, necessarily involves the shaping of a new regime of memory. The

re-shaping of memory and identity is present in multiple nodes and sites. During the last two years, Israel, and with it the US (with Europe not far behind), has voiced a new demand of the Palestinians in particular, and of the Arab states more generally: that they should recognize Israel as a Jewish state, a demand that peaked in the aftermath of the war on Gaza in 2008–09. This is not to be confused with the "recognition of the state of Israel," the old demand, which was accepted by the Palestinians in the Oslo Accords. In the Oslo Accords, the Palestinians did recognize the state of Israel, a recognition of Israel as a de facto state (regardless of its origins or the rights and wrongs incurred in its establishment) with rights of security and borders. It was a recognition that sought a middle ground between past wrongs and future costs. Indeed, even Hamas moved toward this when leaders of the movement announced on various occasions that they would be prepared to accept the 1967 borders, provided there was a reciprocal recognition. (Chernus, May 31, 2006; Hass, 9/11/2008).

The Palestinian recognition of Israel at Oslo had not been reciprocated in an Israeli recognition of the Palestinians as a nation, with rights to secure borders (even on the 22 percent of their land that remained after the 1948 war), security, and independence.[403] The recognition of Israel as a Jewish state has a different valence to the recognition of the state of Israel (to exist in security): it is intended as a recognition of its right to constitute itself as a (exclusively) Jewish state. This has radical implications for the modes and outcomes of the resolution of the conflict and for the prospective trajectories of Palestinian-Jewish relationships in the region. If Israel were established as a Jewish state by right, then what would that say about the rights of the Palestinians dispossessed by its establishment, and of the resolution of the refugee problem? Israel would have no moral or material obligation to the refugee population, created mostly through violent evictions and dispossession in the 1948 war (Pappe 2006; Morris 2004; Masalha 1992). Indeed, the demand suggests that Palestinians are to recognize that their being forced out of their homes and lands by Jewish forces in 1948, and that the expropriation of their lands, homes, and properties, and the redistribution of these to immigrants from other places, was just and right. In other words, it suggests that the Palestinians must have been, and must see themselves as having been, only historical flotsam (temporary keepers of the land, as religious Jewish settlers in the West Bank today assert), whose dispersion is inconsequential, and in keeping with the natural order of life. This is an attempt to reshape

subjectivity in a colonial mode, to advance a colonial regime of memory, which demands an act of symbolic self-annihilation, and would in the process always also extract a further price in the ways in which the Palestinians' now selfabsented rights are dealt with. But it goes beyond that. It is understood by Palestinians as a preparation for another and final round of ethnic cleansing, as the 1.2 million Palestinians who are inside Israel today (and formally Israeli citizens) are increasingly facing calls for their "transfer."[404] What indeed would acceding to such a demand do to the nature of contemporary international covenants based on "universal" human rights, and which at present reject the principles of ethnic cleansing, forcible transfer, acquisition of territory by force, colonial conquest, religious or ethnic (or ethno-national) discrimination, etc.? In inspecting this particular node of the memory/representational regime being promoted in this region, it becomes evident that this specific struggle, and the struggle over representation more generally, was never a matter that works merely on the level of description. As with all discourses and discursive moves, it operates on the level of the performative, and is part of its thrust. This is clearly evident when we examine the representational practices deployed and embedded within the machinery and performances of lethal war.

One can now locate the points of contact and overlap between this memory/representational regime and the war machinery that is repeatedly turned on to one spot after another, and thus identify the constitutive vector of the global moment in this region:

1) It inverts the narrative of cause and effect, in locale after locale, and in the process rewrites history and memory.

2) It creates a marked population, one marked by exception from what is the projected/avowed norm—the purposive constitution of what Agamben (1998, 2005) describes as the "state of exception."

3) It subverts the agency of multiple marked "others" and, more significantly, also their very right to agency. It is thus meant to work at the level of "subjectivity," operating a powerful form of bio-politics.

4) It retracts the applicability of Enlightenment categories, at least as pertaining to specific populations, and organically generalizes, that is, globalizes, assent to this state of exception, or at least tries to.

5) In contra-distinction, it establishes a permanent space of sovereign exception for the powers.

6) It produces an open-ended crisis of security, described elsewhere in terms of the politics of fear, whilst at the same time producing global hotspots of insecurity through the very practices avowedly seeking it, especially in the zones ofthe marked populations.

7) It subverts the instruments of decolonization and universalization of rights, and reconfigures them through performative episodes and through sustained performances of lethal power into serving those who are powerful in the global arena.

The globalizing of specific cultural terms of representation—ones that stereotype, malign, and rob entire peoples of even the possibility of self-representation and agency—is perhaps indexed in the struggle over global iconic signs. On May 5, 2009, a news item on the Arabic al Jazeera television showed the families of Palestinian prisoners in Israel protesting outside an Israeli prison where their sons were being held. The reason was the decision of the Israeli authorities that all Palestinian prisoners would have to wear orange uniforms: the Guantanamo orange.[405] The women protesting outside the prison passionately declared their refusal to have their sons cast as “terrorists.” The instruction to wear orange was perceived as an attempt to label the Palestinian prisoners visibly and iconically as “terrorists” and thus attach to them all the routine public attributes of dangerous terrorists within international circuits of image and representation. Of course, given the situated reversibility of signs, the Guantanamo orange is itself for people in the anti-war movement a sign and an icon of injustice and the collapse of law.

Nevertheless, what the families of these prisoners correctly perceived is the nature of the circuits of definition and the resulting circulation of iconic identifiers in the current world system, marked as it is by the hegemony of “the war on terror.” If the Israelis were to be successful in this move, Palestinian prisoners, the large majority of whom are abducted from their homes simply for refusing the occupation, would become more easily imaged and represented as “terrorists,” and the circuit of redefinition of identities, re-presentation of persons and rights, and reconstitution ofthe terms of personal, political, and national claims, as well as the memory rights attached to them, would become activated, with the resulting perceptual categorizations coursing around global circuits and detracting from the legitimacy of a struggle that at one time had the General Assembly of the United Nations overwhelmingly behind it. Here-the struggle over representation is manifested in both its senses: we can see precisely how the one sense of representation (depiction, portrayal, symbolic fashioning, and presentation) interfaces and articulates with the second sense of representation, as in giving voice to and respecting claims and rights.

*** Conclusion

I have argued here that the unfolding of the global moment in the Arab region is characterized by a remarkable scale of systemic external state violence, waged wholesale against peoples in an area that is dense with geo-strategic assets, but at the same time thick with ideo-strategic obstacles to the continued and/or expanded dominance of the major powers in the capitalist global order. Additionally, I have been attempting to locate the kind of representational landscape that is an integral feature of this moment, a landscape that has been constructed as the scene for the inscription of various violent forms of political action. I argue that violence has always been endemic in political order, but that this violence in the Arab and Islamic region is a constitutive vector within the trajectory of the current global system. The discourse on “terror” is the other side of the practice of terror: the other side of the subversion of international law as law for the species, transforming it to that which fits the compass of dominant power relationships and imperial ambitions. The redistribution and reconfiguration of sovereign rights is an attempt to overcome the gains of decolonization, extremely modest as they were, and to roll back the looming horizons of deeper decolonization, and thus counter the declining economic hegemony

of what have been the main economic powers since World War II, and to do so within (at least some of) the frames of discourses produced by the era of decolonization itself, discourses that have been globally disseminated, even as their terms have not been practically implemented.

Viewed from the vantage point of the Arab and Islamic region, the substantive logic that shapes contemporary globalization, and this global moment, reveals it to be only the newest phase of the global colonial capitalist system. But this phase carries distinctive features. First, contra to writers who emphasize cultural globalization as an entirely distinct dynamic (or even as the central site) of “globalization,” what is distinct about this moment of the global system is that it has evolved to a point when imperial dominion enjoys and operates a global synergy between the economic, the military, and the cultural, between the symbolic and the corporeal (as the current lethal siege of one and a half million people in Gaza, underthe watch of the seif-avowed “international community,” demonstrates). It is the full integration of the cultural and the representational into the mechanism of the global system, though never without contestation. The second feature is the hi-tech instrumentality that reshapes the global system’s mechanisms and powers this synergy. The third is the “collective” character of domination and the colonial/imperial vision, a feature evidenced in the collaborative alignment of the dominant powers in relation to the Arab and Islamic region, despite a latitude of competition and difference between them.[406]

“Globalization” today is not the global village; it is the corporate empire, in more than one sense of the term. Nor is it dis-embedded flexibility and disembodied flows, operating in different registers and amenable to intelligible abstraction, as flows that restructure space and time (though they indeed do that at both the micro and macro levels). Rather these flows are in actuality specific kinds of vectors, which are imbricated together and intersect at various key points, whose mapping remains a significant project that can elucidate more fully the shape of the current global system, as well as the potentialities of reshaped and regenerated vectors of contestation and challenge, some indeed arising from its own dynamics.

[376] Murray talks in the same sense of “thanatopolitics.” See S. J. Murray (2005).

[377] In this sense, of course, the instrumental logics can serve to transmute the substantive ones on a scalar level, but that remains a topic for further elaboration.

[378] The breakup of Yugoslavia was a case in point, as was the problem of blood diamonds in Africa.

[379] See Mahmood Mamdani’s excellent work (2004) that traces the connections between non-state violence and state action.

[380] As the problem of Somali Pirates and the international system shows. See Scahill April 8, 2009

[381] See the interesting quantitative study by Ibrahim A. Elbadawi and Nicholas Sambanis (2000) which tries to demonstrate this.

[382] For example, Egypt’s US$6 million arms sale to Rwanda was facilitated by a French bank, and Israel was the conduit used to deliver US weapons to Nicaragua’s Somoza regime in the 1980s during the period in which it was involved in massive internal repression and mass killings in its fight against the Sandinista rebels. Regional players also have increasingly played out their own stakeholder trajectories of interest, as the involvement of Iran in Iraq and Ethiopia’s intervention in Somalia demonstrate. Such interventions are enabled by the centripetal dynamics produced by the play of global powers.

[383] See, for example, Jeremy Scahill, Blackwater:The Rise of the World’s Most Powerful Mercenary Army, 2007. See also Robert Young Pelton, Licensed to Kill, 2006.

[384] One might also keep in mind here the importance of the arms industry for the contemporary capitalist order, a subject which deserves address in another context.

[385] A modality captured in Devetak and Hughes' (2008) beautifully apt description of violence as "globalization's shadow."

[386] At the time of the war, there were reports in the US media that suggested that more ordnance had been used on Iraq than had been dropped by all the parties combined in the whole of World War II (Kifner, February 4, 1991).

[387] In 1998, Denis Halliday, United Nations Humanitarian Coordinator in Iraq, resigned his post saying "We are in the process of destroying an entire society. It is as simple and terrifying as that. It is illegal and immoral." See Fisk, October 15,1998

[388] For the war on Afghanistan see the Medecm Sens Frontiers Press Release December 5,! 2001. See also Whittle 2001, and Herold (n.d.) as well as Herold 2002.

[389] See, for example, BBC News, May 13, 2009. [[http://news.bbc.co.Uk/2/hi/middle_][http://news.bbc.co.Uk/2/hi/middle_]] east/8048460.stm

[390] Indeed, one that could qualify it as a crime against humanity by international legal standards.

[391] As in the second US war on Iraq, with the use of embedded reporting and the Israeli army's denial of access to international journalists during the Gaza war.

[392] For more on the iron wall see Lynfield 2009; Al-Naami, 2010, and Morrow and al- Omrani, 2010.

[393] On the killing of Iraqi scientists, see Baker, Ismael, and Ismael, Cultural Cleansing in Iraq, 2009.

[394] For more on the violence focused on the region, see Gregory (2004)

[395] The colonial and imperial project is directed to diverting a region's natural resources away from indigenous populations to other actors, and to altering the use of such resources from supporting the normal reproduction of indigenous life in the specific locale, to serving the production of wealth for external others—either in locales outside or relocated to the place of extraction. These projects also either transform the indigenous populations th tmselves into natural resources to be used for the production of wealth, or render them superfluous.

[396] It is noteworthy that a key point in Huntington's thesis on the clash of civilizations is, in fact the assertion that the world's major resources in the future will lie in "Muslim" and "Confucian" territories.

[397] For an interesting study on the impact of international NGOs and donor agencies in the occupied Palestinian territories, see Sari Hanafi and Linda Tabar (2005).

[398] See Fisk and Jones 2006, as well as Zunes (2006). An interesting and significant article aopeared on the eve of the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 1982, outlining a prospective strategy for Israel which calls for the fragmentation, of the region in accord with ethnic and confessional/religious divides, as well as the undermining of Palestinian life and security west of the river Jordan- a scenario that has increasingly been played out over the last three decades, and aligns well with the neo-con agenda that launched the

2003 Iraq war. The author, Oded Yinon, was a senior Israeli foreign ministry advisor at the time. The article originally appeared in Hebrew in the journal Kivunim, published by the Department of Publicity/The World Zionist Organization, Jerusalem. It was translated by Israel Shahak, the President of the Israeli League for Human and Civil Rights (1970–1990) and published in English under the title “The Zionist Plan for the Middle East” by the Association of Arab- Amr rican University Graduates. See Yinon (1982) “A Strategy for Israel in the Nineteen Eighties”, and Shahak, 1982.

[399] Even the Queen of Sweden reportedly joined the chorus of protest in relation to Palestinian parents. See the Women’s Centre For Legal Aid And Counseling Position Paper (2000); see also Marwan Bishara (2002. 38). In 2003 the Elie Weisel Foundation for Humanity gave an Elie Weisel Prize in Ethics to a paper that recycled these and related claims about Palestinians to account for the killings of young stone throwers. See [[http://www.eliewieselfoundation.org/CM_Images/UploadedImages/WinnersEssays/][http://www.eliewieselfoundation.org/CM_Images//UploadedImages/WinnersEssays/]] Katherine_Bair.pdf

“Interestingly, the founders of the International Solidarity Movment (ISM) were reported as having developed the idea after the Israeli newspaper Maariv published that 1 million bullets had been fired by the Israeli army during the first three weeks of the Intifada, mostly at unarmed demonstrators.” See Beinin, 2009. “Defense for Children international/ Palestine Section (DCP/PS) produced statistics that showed a pattern of injury that favored the head and chest of the youngsters.” See DCI/PS November 13, 2000 report submitted to Mrs. Mary Robinson, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights.

[400] “It has, of course, ever been thus, in the history of the colonial world system, if one were to look back at the discourses in relation to native Americans, both North and South, even those produced by French Enlightenment intellectuals in the late eighteenth century, to discourses about aborigines in Australia and New Zealand, to those about people kidnapped by the millions from their homes in Africa and transported to the Americas to be slaves, the discourses and the practices that embed them, and in which they are embedded, are absolutely equivalent.”

[401] For whose treatment, of course, the Geneva Conventions would apply equally, but whose detainment, in the first place, would not contravene any law of war, except in asymmetric imperial framings of international law.

[402] Nor is there any mention of the 11,000 Palestinian prisoners held, many in administrative detention without charge for years, or the refusal, extending over ten years of “peace” negotiations, to release the 400 women and minors held in Israeli prisons.

[403] All that the Israelis officially recognized then was that the PLO was the legitimate representative of the Palestinian people.

[404] The Palestinians inside Israel are those whose families in 1948 managed to remain in their towns and villages, but who became a minority overnight in their own land. Even Israeli leaders who are not deemed to be on the far right, such as Kadima leader Tzipi Livni, insist that the Arabs in Israel should look elsewhere for their national aspirations and reject the idea that Israel should be a state for ail its citizens. See BBC News, Friday, December 12, 2008, “Livni sparks Arab ‘transfer’ row.” [[http://news.bbc.co.Uk/2/hi/][http://news.bbc.co.Uk/2/hi/]] middle_east/7779087.stm

[405] Samoudi, Ali, May, 27, 2009.

[406] Samir Amin’s (2010) characterization of contemporary globalization as “collective imperialism” is apt here.

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** Mainstreaming Islam: Taking Charge of the Faith

Dale F. Eickelman

The most profound transformations in the Muslim world today are occurring through the actions of middle class professionals and religious intellectuals who are “taking charge” of their faith rather than leave its public expression to religious professionals. This process of “mainstreaming” is not unique to the Muslim world, and it includes tolerance of other faiths and accommodation of alternative Muslim religious ideas and practices. It results in presenting Islam as an integral and “acceptable” part of civic life and participation in “mainstreaming,” best thought of more as a process than a specific outcome requires development of concrete skills and aptitudes the importance of which varies according to context. Building on the author’s encounters with the Sultanate of Oman, Morocco, and elsewhere, this article observes the remarkable implicit and explicit transformations of public space that have occurred since the 1960s, including the rapid spread of mass higher education, the greater ease of travel and migration, and the proliferation of new communications media. By building a better understanding of these “mainstreaming” skills, this article suggests a more complex analysis of the effects of Muslims who are rethinking religion outside of traditional boundaries and shaping new social movements.a

Laymen and women, formally trained entrepreneurs with organizational skills, and forward-looking political and social leaders are having a major impact as they rethink Islamic thought and practice. In a word, they are assuming responsibility as individuals for “taking charge” of their faith. The most profound transformations in the Muslim world today occur through the actions of middle-class professionals and religious intellectuals not trained in the conventional Islamic sciences (‘ulum al-din). They are taking charge of developing their faith and practices for a modern, even postmodern, world that is as challenging for Muslims and non-Muslims alike. We are familiar with fundamentalists, radicals, and secularists, but less so with intellectuals rethinking religion outside traditional boundaries, organizers shaping new movements, others working quietly behind the

scenes in support roles, and reformers facing real institutional challenges as they go public.

The focus on ideas and organizational forms has been well studied. The goal of this essay is to explore the impact of the concrete sets of skills and aptitudes now being cultivated among members of the educated middle classes, religious and non-religious, clerical and non-clerical, in Muslim-majority countries. These skills contribute to mainstreaming Islam, to the production of what is less exotic and therefore more normal and acceptable, which is itself a form of social and religious tolerance.

A dozen years ago (Eickelman 1998), I was certain that the growing openness of debate about the role of religion in politics and society in the Muslim-majority world was part of a long-term mainstream trend toward strong religious support for civil society, which, like the Solidarity movement in Poland in the 1970s or the “liberation theology” movements in Latin America in the 1960s and 1970s, was confronting authoritarianism and contributing to an expanded civil society. Even the Iranian revolution of 1978–79 initially seemed to fit into this pattern, and certainly reaffirmed that religious movements can have a major role to play in modern social life.

The prediction of historical trends as one lives through them is hazardous at best. As Marc Bloch (1964: 148) wrote in Feudal Society, some of the greatest transformations come about in the process of trying to adapt the old rather than create new social forms. Often the great transformations become evident only in retrospect. It is no longer possible to argue, as I did in 1998, that an “Islamic Reformation” is just around the corner, but the longterm trend remains one of increasingly open and vigorous debates about the role of religion in society. In this essay, I explain why, notwithstanding the economic, social, and political problems that confront most Muslim- majority societies, I remain optimistic about long-term trends. Since I try to explain developments from the ground up, I draw on my experience as an anthropologist who has worked since the late 1960s both in Iraq and Morocco, and since the late 1970s in the Arabian Peninsula and elsewhere in the Muslim-majority world.

*** Religious Life in an Arabian Peninsula, 1978

Al-Hamra, a provincial capital in the northern interiors of Oman, was remote even by the standards of that country when; I first visited it in June 1978. Paved roads and electricity had not yet reached the oasis; only a few homes had generator-powered televisions, and the nearest telephone was almost an hour’s drive away. It was much the same when I returned to the oasis a year later to conduct field research. On this second visit, I spent a day in formal discussions with local officials and tribal leaders, and then, having missed the last bus to Muscat, was obliged to spend the night. The shaykh, ortribal leader, ofthe ‘Abriyin graciously invited me to stay in his guest house (sabla), along with several men who were visiting from outlying villages.

Well before dawn, these other guests—observant Muslims to a manrose for morning prayer, and one of them called to me to ask whether I intended to perform my ablutions.

<quote>

“Not yet,” I replied, and went back to sleep.

</quote>

Some minutes later; my host, Shaykh ‘Abdallah Muhanna’ al-‘Abri, gently prodded me with the muzzle of a machine pistol. In Oman, it is bad manners to touch a sleeping person with one’s hands, and Shaykh ‘Abdallah was a model of politeness.

<quote>

“Are you sick?” he asked. “You’re not getting ready to pray.” Half asleep, I mumbled, “I’m Christian; we pray differently.” Shaykh ‘Abdullah looked momentarily puzzled, then went away.

</quote>

His puzzlement was no mystery. The shaykh had naturally assumed that a speaker of Arabic with a reasonable command of Omani etiquette would also rise to pray. In the late 1970s, he and the other inhabitants ofthe oasis had no pressing cause to think systematically about any faith beyond Islam, or even the different perspectives among Muslims themselves. Such terms as “Muslim” and “Christian” scarcely entered conversations. The British army officers and oil company officials who regularly passed through the region rarely stayed for long and, in any case, gave the inhabitants of al-Hamra little reason to think about other religions. The South Asian construction workers at the oasis were mostly Muslim, as were the schoolteachers from other Arab countries.

Yet al-Hamra (population 2,600 in 1980; 6,000 today), a compact town of mud-brick buildings on a rocky slope next to an underground irrigation canal (falaj), was changing—just how profoundly, I did not then grasp. A decade earlier, the oasis’s habitable limits, still defined by the watchtowers used to guard against rival tribes, had begun to push outward, as new diesel-driven pumps brought water from privately owned wells to new agricultural lands far away from the head of the town’s folaj (where, the water being purest, the tribal aristocracy lived). By the late 1970s, schools and government offices were being built beyond the marketplace, once the far end of the town. By then, too, nearly all school-age children in al-Hamra attended elementary school, and government jobs and wage labor had supplemented date palms as the inhabitants’ foremost source of income. The mud-brick profile of al- Hamra was fast being altered, and I had come—and would return again and again over the ensuing years—to study the transformation.

A few weeks after my overnight stay, I returned with my wife and daughter to spend a year in al-Hamra. Adjusting to a rhythm of life marked by the five daily prayers and, for men, the weekly congregational prayer, we soon learned to distinguish the voices of neighbors calling the faithful to mosques throughout the oasis. Islamic rituals were so thoroughly woven into the daily life of the community that everyone took them for granted.

*** Explaining Islam

That was why, on a return visit nearly a decade later, I was startled when a young relative of the tribal leader—a high school student when I had first met him in 1979, but by the late 1980s a university-trained government employee—announced to me that the people of al-Hamra, his own relatives included, were “ignorant” of Islam and therefore acted “like animals,” that is, unthinkingly. “Sure,” he said. “They pray and fast, but they can’t explain why. Muslims must explain their beliefs.”

His words came back to me in April 1997, when I gave a public talk in Istanbul. I had been invited by an organization connected with the Refah (Welfare) Party, which had been running Istanbul since 1994, until it was banned in early 1998 and replaced by the Virtue Party, banned in turn three years later and replaced by the Justice and Development Party (AKP), which currently governs Turkey. Although some Turks routinely described the Refah party as “fundamentalist” in the 1990s, the Turkish panelists who commented on my talk were hardly cut off from the outside world or rejected it. They invoked such figures as the German philosopher Jurgen Habermas and the French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu, and were at ease in English and other foreign languages. These, and other religiously minded young Turks I met, were not the “fundamentalists” of stereotype. The reality they represented— like that of the young Omani policeman—was far more complex.

*** Mass Higher Education, Mass Communications, and the Religious Imagination

Years hence, we will look back on the last half century as a time of change as profound for the Muslim world as the Protestant Reformation was for Christendom. Like the printing press in the sixteenth century, the combination of mass education and mass communication is transforming this world, a broad geographical crescent stretching from North Africa through Central Asia, the Indian subcontinent, and the Indonesian archipelago, and acquiring a significant presence in Europe as well. In unprecedentedly large numbers, the faithful—whether in the vast cosmopolitan city of Istanbul or in

Oman’s tiny, remote al-Hamra oasis—are examining and debating the fundamentals of Muslim belief and practice in ways that their less self-conscious predecessors in the faith would never have imagined. This highly deliberate examination of the faith is what constitutes—I wrote in 1998—an Islamic Reformation.

Unfortunately, buzzwords such as “fundamentalism” and catchy phrases such as Samuel Huntington’s rhyming “West versus Rest” and Daniel Lerner’s alliterative “Mecca or mechanization” are of little use in understanding this transformation. Indeed, they obscure, or even distort, the immense spiritual and intellectual ferment that is taking place today among the world’s estimated 1.8 billion Muslims, reducing it in most cases to a fanatical rejection of everything modern, liberal, or progressive. To be sure, such fanaticism plays a part in what is happening—dramatically and violently—but it also deflects attention from a much more important story: the unprecedented access that ordinary people now have to sources of information and knowledge about religion and other aspects of their society.

Quite simply, in country after country, government officials, traditional religious scholars, and officially sanctioned preachers are finding it very hard to monopolize the tools of literate culture. For example, when I first ventured as an anthropologist into the Middle East and North Africa in 1968, I routinely saw people in southern Iraq gather around literate members of the community, including shopkeepers, to have the newspapers read aloud to them. That same year, in rural Morocco, I was not infrequently asked to translate the formal Arabic of radio newscasts into colloquial Moroccan Arabic. By the mid-1970s, however, the need for such translation had dramatically decreased. And in 1992, during the Moroccan parliamentary election campaigns, I observed that young people, even in remote villages, were unafraid to ask the candidates probing questions, because they now could speak the public language of the educated. I also saw a makhazni, a low- ranking rural auxiliary policeman, politely but firmly refuse a questionable command from a furious local Ministry of the Interior official, pointing to written instructions he had received from provincial headquarters. Just a decade earlier, the same policeman would have been illiterate and therefore unable to challenge a questionable order.

In al-Hamra, Oman, when I first came to know it, people received “news” from Shaykh ‘Abdallah. In 1980, when he started his generator to run the electric fans in his guest house, everyone in town knew that visitors with “news” had arrived and that soon the shaykh would be relaying it to them or at least as much of it as he cared to tell). Two years later, when I was again 1 in Oman, families in al-Hamra saw the same TV images of the massacres in Beirut’s Sabra and Shatila refugee camps that viewers in America did—thanks to CBS video feed to Oman state television. Today, with paved roads, mobile telephones, electricity, Internet access, and satellite television, al-Hamra is a H changed place. “News” is no longer a monopoly of the few, and satellite TV ’ images bring people and places previously at the margin of local awareness into the foreground. Among other consequences, this is helping to alter the way in which large numbers of Muslims, in al-Hamra and elsewhere, think about themselves, their religion, and their politics.

Mass education, the other major catalyst of change, has also gained momentum. In much of the Muslim world, mass education began to be introduced only after the 1950s, and in many countries considerably later. Morocco, for instance, committed itself to universal schooling after gaining independence from France in 1956. Though in 1957, only 13,000 secondary school degrees were awarded, and university enrollment remained low, by 1965, there were more than 200,000 students in secondary schools, and some 20,000 in universities. By 1992, secondary school enrollment topped 1.5 million, and university students numbered 240,000. As of 2007, 83 percent of school-age children complete the full primary education cycle, 68 percent enroll in secondary education, and 11 percent are in some form of post-secondary education. Illiteracy rates in the general populace remain high—31 percent for men and 57 percent for women over the age of 15—but there is now a critical mass of educated people who are able to read and think for themselves without relying on state and religious authorities.

The situation in Oman is more dramatic because the transformation has taken place in a much shorter period. In 1975–76, a mere 22 students graduated from secondary school. Little more than a decade later, in 1987–88, 13,500 did. In 1995, 60,000 graduated; there are more than 3,500 students in post-secondary institutions, including the national university, which opened in 1986. Today, private universities compete with the state

university because of the strong demand for higher education, and literacy is virtually universal among the current school-age population.

Elsewhere the story is much the same, though the starting dates and levels of achievement differ. In Turkey, Indonesia, and Malaysia, mass education has reached every city, town, and village. In Turkey, for instance, adult illiteracy rates as of 2007 were only 4 percent for males and 19 percent for females, down from 65 percent and 85 percent, respectively, in.the mid-twentieth century. Secondary schools are now ubiquitous, and both private and public universities have proliferated. In Indonesia, university enrollment, only 50,000 in 1960, reached 1.9 million in 1990. Iran also has seen a significant expansion in educational opportunities at all levels. In Egypt and Morocco, population growth threatens to outpace educational expansion. Even so, the number of people who are able to converse intelligently with religious and political authorities, and not just listen to them, has increased dramatically.

So has the market for books, including those on religion and society. One book that represents the advent of public critical thinking about religion is the groundbreaking The Book and the Qur’an: A Contemporary Interpretation, written by Muhammad Shahrur, a Syrian civil engineer (1990; see also Shahrur 2009). To date, his 1990 book has sold tens of thousands of copies. Even though circulation of the 800-page book has been banned or discouraged in many Arab countries, photocopy machines, pirate editions (in Egypt, among other places), and CDs have allowed it to travel across state borders.

*** Voices for Critical Thinking

Shahrur, who was educated in Damascus, Moscow, and Dublin, draws an analogy between the Copernican revolution and Qur’anic interpretation, which for too long, he says, has been shackled by the conventions of medieval jurists:

<quote>

People believed for a long time that the sun revolved around the earth, but they were unable to explain some phenomena derived from this assumption until one person, human like themselves, said, ‘The opposite is true: The earth revolves around the sun.’... After a quarter of a century of study and reflection, it dawned on me that we Muslims are shackled by prejudices, some of which are completely opposite the correct perspective (Shahrur 1990: 29)

</quote>

On issues ranging from the role of women in society to the need for a “creative interaction” with non-Muslim philosophies, Shahrur argues that Muslims should reinterpret sacred texts and apply them to contemporary social and moral issues. Islamic inheritance law, for instance, which provides women a smaller share of any legacy than men, may have been an advance for women in an earlier era but, he contends, it is discriminatory in modern society. “If Islam is sound for all times and places,” Shahrur says, Muslims must not neglect historical developments and the interaction of different generations. Muslims must act as if “the Prophet just... informed us of this Book” (Shahrur 1990: 44).

Shahrur’s book is representative of the style of many contemporary thinkers who reflect critically on the Islamic tradition. No one book is likely to be seen as the Muslim equivalent of the 95 Theses that Martin Luther nailed to the door of the Wittenberg Castle church in 1517. It took years before Luther’s ideas took hold, but eventually even steadfast opponents had to take them into account and modify their ways of thinking and acting. The same may happen with Shahrur’s ideas and those of other critical thinkers, though even more rapidly. By the late 1990s, when I stopped counting, Shahrur’s views had been assailed in fourteen books (some longer than his original one) and countless magazine articles and sermons.

Shahrur is not alone in attacking conventional religious wisdom and the intolerant certitudes of religious radicals, or in calling for an ongoing interpretation of the application of sacred texts to social and political life. Another Syrian thinker, the secularist Sadiq Jalal al-‘Azm, for instance, does the same. In May 1997, a debate between al-‘Azm and -Shaykh Yusif al-

Qaradawi, a conservative religious intellectual (Graf and Skovgaard-Petersen 2009), was broadcast on al-Jazeera Satellite TV (Qatar), and for the first time in the memory of many viewers, the religious conservative came across as the weaker, more defensive voice. That program is unlikely to be rebroadcast on state-controlled television in most Arab nations, where programming on religious and political themes is cautious. Nevertheless, satellite TV technology and videotape render traditional censorship ineffective. Videotapes of the broadcast circulated from hand to hand in Morocco, Oman, Syria, Egypt, and elsewhere in the 1990s, and have now been replaced by even less expensive DVDs.

Other voices also advocate reform. Turkey's Ali Bulaf, a university-based theologian, has captured the imagination of the educated young with his call for authenticity and a reinterpretation of the first years of the Prophet's rule, for applying Muhammad's precepts and practices to current controversies about pluralism and civil society. Fethullah Gillen, Turkey's answer to media-savvy American evangelist Billy Graham, appeals to a mass audience. In televised chat shows, interviews, and occasional sermons, Gillen speaks about Islam and science, democracy, modernity, religious and ideological tolerance, the importance of education, and current events. Residing in the eastern United States since the late 1990s, Gillen maintains strong ties with his followers in Turkey and throughout the world, and has served as a strong voice for education, critical thinking, and integrity in public life (Yavuz and Esposito 2003).

Contemporary books on Islam are not all high brow. Mass schooling has created a wide audience of people who read but are not literary sophisticates, and there has been an explosive growth in what a French colleague, Yves Gonzalez-Quijano, calls generic "Islamic books"—inexpensive, attractively printed texts intended for such readers. Many address practical questions of howto live as a Muslim in the modern world and the perils of neglecting Islamic obligations. Not all of these books appeal to reason and moderation. Some have bold, eye-catching covers and sensational titles, while other, more subdued works offer advice to young women on how to live as Muslims today. Often based on the sermons of popular preachers, "Islamic" books are written in a breezy, colloquial style rather than the cadences of traditional literary Arabic, and are sold on sidewalks and outside mosques rather than in bookstores. While Egyptian

Nobel Laureate Naguib Mahfouz was considered successful if he sold 5,000 copies of one of his novels in a year in his own country, Islamic books often have sales in six figures (Gonzalez-Quijano 1998).

Increasingly in the Muslim world, religious beliefs are self-consciously held, explicitly expressed, and formally systematized. It is no longer sufficient simply to “be” Muslim and to follow Muslim practices. One must also reflect upon Islam and defend one’s views. In Oman, one of the few places where all three Muslim traditions—Sunni, Shi’a, and Ibadi—converge, the debates can be spirited indeed, as I learned from one young Omani, who recalled the late-night dormitory arguments he and other students had in secondary school in the 1970s.

Roughly 85 percent ofthe world’s Muslimsare Sunni or “orthodox” Muslim. At least 14 percent—mostly in Iran, but with significant minorities in southern Lebanon, Iraq, Syria, Pakistan, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, and coastal Oman—are Shi’a, or “sectarian,” and believe that legitimate religious leadership of the worldwide Muslim community should remain in the hands of the family of the Prophet Muhammad. The Ibadiyya, not as well known, believe that any man can become head ofthe Muslim community, provided that he possesses the necessary piety and moral qualities. The Ibadiyya are few in number and clustered mostly in northern Oman (where they constitute nearly half the country’s population), East Africa, southern Algeria, and Libya.

When I visited al-Hamra in 1979, many Ibadi Muslims could practice their faith without reducing it to formal principles or comparing it with “other” Muslim or non-Muslim doctrines. Now, however, most of the younger inhabitants of the oasis are aware of what it means to be an Ibadi Muslim, and how Ibadi practices and doctrines—on such questions as whether or not believers see God on Judgment Day—differ from Sunni and Shi’a ones. In the early 1980s, when Ibadi university students went to study abroad in places such as Tucson, Arizona, they were shocked to find other Muslim students describing them as kafirs, or unbelievers, and asked Oman’s mufti, an Ibadi religious leader but who represents all of Oman’s Muslims,

how to respond. One result was the dissemination of videocassettes and pamphlets explaining Ibadi doctrine and faith and arguing that Ibadi principles agree in most respects with Sunni ones (Eickelman 1989).

The rise of literacy and the spread of communications—with tapes (both audio and video) and now CDs and DVDs of the teachings of popular preachers being played incessantly in taxis and other settings, banned literature being copied almost everywhere, and the increasing accessibility of the Internet—have prompted more Muslims to interpret Islam's texts, classical or modern, and apply them to modern life. These texts offer advice in popular "how to" pamphlets: how to lead the life of a Muslim woman in a modern city, how to raise children in the Islamic way, how to follow Islamic banking and business practices. There are even Islamic "romance" novels for teenagers (Huq 2003). In other pamphlets and cassettes, often clandestinely circulated, Muslims measure particular regimes by "Islamic" standards. Sometimes, as on the Arabian Peninsula, these standards are progressive, insisting upon governmental integrity and the upholding of human rights. Others are reactionary, restricting women's public roles and advocating religious censorship and control of schools.

The particular situations in each country and region vary widely, but everywhere there is a collapse of earlier hierarchical notions of religious authority based on a claimed mastery of fixed bodies of religious texts and recognition by a prior generation of scholars. In Central Asia in the early 1990s, a Tajik garage mechanic became the leader of the most popular Islamic movement in the region. Even when there are state-appointed religious authorities—as in Oman, Saudi Arabia, Iran, Egypt, Malaysia, and some of the Central Asian republics—there no longer is any guarantee that their word will be heeded, or even that they themselves will follow the lead ofthe regime.

No Muslims—whether their outlook be deemed "fundamentalist," "traditionalist," or "modernist"—have been unaffected by the sweeping changes of recent decades. Islam is being democratized. More and more, Muslims today claim attachment to God's unmediated word as interpreted only by their own conscience. But that does not mean that Muslim tradition is simply being discarded. Rather, it is being examined and discussed. The

forces supporting conventional interpretations of God’s word remain strong, but many increasingly open debates are in progress.

This was evident the summer of 1997 in Damascus in what could be called the “duel of the wedding speeches” (subsequently available on videotape, of course). First, at the wedding of Muhammad Shahrur’s daughter, some 600 guests, including many state and Ba’th party officials and one nonSyrian (me), heard Jawdat Sa’id—nicknamed “Gandhi” because in June 1967 he had refused to fight in the Syrian army against Israel, arguing that the Arab nation could prevail only through nonviolent resistance—explain how Islamic belief was related to current events. Then, two days later, at another Damascus wedding, Sa’id Ramadan al-Buti, a popular Syrian television preacher who strongly opposes Shahrur’s views, spoke in response. After referring to the talk given at the recent wedding of the daughter of “a certain well-known engineer,” he declared: “Just as one goes to a medical doctor for illness and [to] an architect to build a house, for Islam one should go only to specialists formally trained in the religious sciences.” Public debates about Islamic faith and practice are protean, and their outcome is far from clear. Shahrur maintains that democracy is a fundamental tenet of Islam, and his proposition has growing appeal. But most Arab regimes remain authoritarian, and in Cairo regime thugs publicly beat advocates of human rights and judicial reform. In Algeria, where Islamist radicals employed terrorism against a brutally repressive military regime throughout the 1990s, and in certain other Muslim countries, the new Islamic self-consciousness and fervor resulted in an even more severe authoritarianism, at least in the short run (Goytisolo 1994). Elsewhere—in Malaysia, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and other Arabian Peninsula states, Morocco, and Egypt—both conservative and relatively liberal regimes have sought to accommodate (or at least to appear to accommodate) a range of views. In still other countries, such as Jordan, regimes have tried to balance explicitly Islamic concerns with secular politics and to incorporate all perspectives into a parliamentary system (Schwedler 2006).

Rising levels of literacy and education, together with the proliferation of new media, do not automatically foster pluralism, tolerance, and civility. People learn at least sometimes from experience. Even Turkey’s ‘ fundamentalist” Refah Party was credited with drawing women into grassroots politics, though it resisted giving them leadership roles (White 2002). In recent

decades, the new media, including the Internet, desktop publishing, video and audiocassettes, Weblogs, CDs, DVDs, Facebook, and Twitter, have progressively eroded the boundary between media producers and receivers. The plummeting cost of the new media has facilitated the access of new people and new forms of communication to public debate and private action, creating possibilities for new forms of community. With the old media, leaders such as Egypt’s Gamal Abdel Nasser spoke to people. The new media create the illusion, and often the reality, of speaking with people.

As in commercial advertising, stunning images and themes, once launched into the public sphere, acquire a life of their own. The 1988 anti-Dukakis campaign advertisement in the United States featuring convicted rapist Willie Horton[407] became an icon for a certain type of communication that circulates well beyond its original audience.

In the years since the Willie Horton campaign attack video, the Internet has emerged as the flagship of the new media. Certain Web sites, such as those carrying statements by the late Abu Musab al-Zarqawi or al-Qa’ida messages made available to Arab satellite media, quickly find their message amplified by the traditional print, radio, and television media, thus effectively and rapidly reaching millions of people. This amplification of messages is built into the content of key Internet postings. Even as the conventional media decline to provide Web site URLs for terrorists and their organizations, the timing and content of postings show considerable sophistication in how to capture the attention of the conventional mass media. Similarly, images from the mass media can be captured on Internet sites and embedded in stories with very different purposes.

*** “Real Virtuality”

In the Muslim-majority world as elsewhere, a new sense of public space has been emerging for some time that is shaped by increasingly open contests over the authoritative use of the symbolic language of religion and politics.

New and increasingly accessible modes of communication make these contests increasingly global, leading local disputes to take on transnational dimensions, linking geographically dispersed communities, and creating affinity communities of the like-minded. Rising levels of mass education and the greater ease of travel have also accelerated this trend. Since September 2001, the wars in Afghanistan, Iraq, and elsewhere, combined with the continuing lack of resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the growing confrontation between the United States and Iran, provide multiple opportunities for new and emerging actors to combine regional causes and persuade new audiences.

Through the Internet and the circulation of videotapes and DVDs, often clandestine, what sociologist Manuel Castells (1996) calls “real virtuality” makes the computer screen not just a channel through which the appearance of reality is communicated, but it has become a compelling part of reality itself. Digital images taken from Abu Ghraib prison are flashed around the world on the Internet, amplified in the conventional media, and repackaged through thousands of Internet sites to convey multiple messages, many of which subvert the legitimacy and credibility of the United States. For a minimal investment, the images originally provided gratis by the jailers themselves create not just a reflection of reality, but also a real virtuality that state authorities are unable to repress or control.

The new media provide more rapid and more flexible ways of building and sustaining contact with constituencies than were available in earlier decades. This combination of new media and new contributors to religious and political debates fosters an awareness on the part of all actors of the diverse ways in which values and practices can be created, often calling into question the formal institutions supported by the state authorities (Eickelman and Anderson 2003). Quite often, as censors have begun to realize, efforts to interdict the electronic media merely attract more attention to prohibited Internet sites.

Cyber audiences do not just react. They also communicate, raising awareness among the like-minded or taking action. Cyber communities rarely exist in isolation. They are embedded in multiple circles of affinity and belonging. Thus, a South Asian Shi'a community, the Daudi Bohras, have exponentially increased their Internet presence over the past decade, solidifying bonds of authority within their local and global community and explaining their beliefs to outsiders (Blank 2001). The Internet plays a role in such rapid dissemination, working in tandem with other media and with vital face-to-face connections to reshape religious and political action—and the older media (Gonzalez-Quijano and Guaaybess 2009).

The new media also facilitate action. Governments in the Arabian Peninsula and elsewhere can program all cell phones in the country to remind parents to registertheir children for school. The same cell phones can be used to bring together demonstrators in Amman to protest a government action in front of the cameras of a complicit Arabic satellite TV journalist faster than security forces can react to disperse them. Global text messaging can call attention to events on the street, on a Weblog, or in other media among friends or the like-minded. Likewise, the government's temporary blocking of popular local Weblogs in Oman in January 2005 communicated to large numbers of youths that something had occurred. Long before any mention was made in the official press about an alleged plot to attack the government, even apolitical teenagers had a remarkably clear idea, through face-to-face communication, of what had occurred. In Iran, in June 2009, Twitter and Facebook emerged as major sources of news for the established older media.

*** Circles of Belonging

The Internet and the readily available electronic media powerfully influence events in the "real" world. The proliferation lowered costs of new media and the means of communication have multiplied the possibilities for creating communities and networks among them, dissolving prior barriers of space and distance, and opening up new grounds for interaction and mutual recognition. The complexity of social life, the modularity of identities, and the contest over primacy cannot be reduced to, nor obliterate the importance of, "warm" circles of community and obligation that offer open-ended mutual

trust and support, demanding loyalty and implying unquestioned reciprocity (Eickelman and Salvatore 2004:15–18). Yet such loyalties, like those of extended families and tribes, are nonetheless intersecting, overlapping, and inevitably divided. “Cold” circles of community—those that are formal, distant, and singlestranded—also make claims to primacy, but they are too removed from daily practices and concerns to secure the ultimate loyalty they claim. Calls for national service and national sacrifice often take this form.

What is distinctive about the modern public sphere is the rapidity with which “cold” circles of community can sometimes merge with and incorporate “warm” ones, creating novel senses of belonging and identity, and the extent to which the Internet can accelerate the creation of “warm” communities of affinity in spite of distance and the fragmentation of communities. The conversations and statements in the electronic media, as in face-to-face communication, involve trusted partners, channels, media, topics, genres, and other communicative conventions set within different social realities. Some media, such as the telephone and local, even neighborhood, television channels in Turkey, fit personalized network structures and the informationseeking behavior of proletarian migrants, whose own networks of kin and friends have become widely, even internationally, dispersed. Across the social scale, some appeals have gained international reach. Syria’s Sa’id Ramadan at-Buti, Turkey’s Fethullah Gulen, Qatar’s Yusuf al-Qaradawi, and some of their equivalents in Iran or in exile elsewhere have similarly attracted followers, interpreters, and translators who disseminate their ideas.

The messages of these thinkers, as of more anonymous persons, whether “moderates” or “radicals,” are inseparable from their contexts not only in tone and style, but also in the means of communication that they and others choose. In an era of multiple and alternative channels of communication, issues of how various publics are reached, how messages with religious and political content are listened to in the new Middle East and in the Muslim-majority world, and the limits on form and content in different channels of communication are as important as the overt content of their messages. At times, these contributions are anonymous, as is the case with some Internet postings, a tactic that transforms the notion of public participation, as might illicit leaflets. In colonial America and in the early years of the American

republic, anonymous pamphlets were a major factor in sustaining an emerging public space (Warner 1990).

The anonymous leaflets of an earlier era, like some Internet postings and unidentified spokespersons in the conventional press, play a similar role today, although in some new media such messages are hard to distinguish from those of crackpots and fringe elements, or disinformation.

*** Globalization From Below

Another characteristic of the new media is that they create a globalization from below. At their core are members of the professional classes, at least partly at home with the multiplying media of communication and possessing the skills to operate them, and their more proletarian counterparts, who use the new media to incorporate expanding networks of otherwise traditional relations into new community forms. As the technicians of globalization as well as its participants, they are both producers and consumers, forming communities on their own scale, but in form not unlike those of multinational corporations: interstitial, fluid, and resting on shared communications, representing a minimal definition of what constitutes a public space. The most influential Internet postings on religious themes, for example, build their authority not only on personal reputation and knowledge of texts, but also increasingly on a demonstrated practical grasp of contemporary society and an ability to share with their audiences an understanding of the challenges of their daily life and existential concerns.

Such a blurring of lines between communities in cyberspace points to more important continuities that allow quick shifts between public and private, and between secret and open. These new publics emerge along a continuum between mass communication aimed theoretically at everyone and direct personal communication aimed at specific others with whom one already has a personal relationship.

This expanding public space facilitates turning the anonymous or unknown contemporary into a consociate working under the common values of

morality and purpose. The Internet contributes to the recognition that such a public is not mass and anonymous, but defined by mutual participation—indeed, by performance. In this sense, which Benedict Anderson (1991: 37–46) refers to as a growing sense of reading together, the sense of a participatory public emerges less from associations, more strictly the domain of civil society, and more from ways of dealing confidently with others in an expanding social universe of shared communication. This growing sense of reading together contributes to the “mainstreaming” of Islam.

*** The Distinctive Features of Mainstreaming

The marketplace of ideas, identities, and social ties is more than a metaphor. It is a reality that decisively shifts the forums and resources of such discourse and its practices. The new media, and especially cyberspace, draw attention to the social organization of communication in which different media operate.

It is especially important to listen to the commonalities and differences in these public messages. Above all, it is dangerously misleading to assume a uniformity of views in the Muslim-majority world or to assume intolerance toward other faiths. For many, the Qur’an (Sura 5, verse 48) gives the final answer to the role of the Muslim community in a multi-community world: “To each among you, We have prescribed a law and a way for acting. If God had so w’lled, he might have made you a single community, but [he has not done so] that he may test you in what he has given you; so compete in goodness.”

The advocates of civil society, democracy, and open debate over basic values—ideals that are explicit in the works of Syria’s Muhammad Shahrur, Turkey’s Fethullah Gillen, and many others—are up against strong vested interests. These ideals threaten the sinecures of many preachers, specialists in religious law, educators, and clerics. Not surprisingly, some efforts to adopt a critical approach to the basics of faith and progress have met with strong opposition.

What I call the Islamic Reformation is nevertheless in progress, even if it cannot be dated with precision. Many Muslims, of course, would resist the partial analogy with Europe's Protestant Reformation. Shortly before first using the term "Islamic Reformation" a dozen years ago, I visited Turkey's Fethullah Gulen. At the end of a spirited discussion on how the shift from face-to-face meetings to television had influenced his message, I mentioned that I wanted to use the term in the title of an article. With polite amusement, he replied, "It's your title, not mine." Gulen explained that he saw his life's work—which includes the idea that there is no contradiction between an Islamic worldview and a scientific one—as an effortto persuade people to understand and live by the basic teachings of Islam. I pointed out that Martin Luther had said something very similar. Luther saw his work as returning to the fundamentals of belief, not creating anything new. Other people called Luther a reformer. He never used the term himself. Only later did others see his ideas and actions as instigating a "reformation."

I concede, however, that the analogy with the Protestant Reformation is imperfect. Yet as Vali Nasr (2009: 24; see also Eickelman 2010) discovered during a visit to Kayseri, Turkey, the mayor invoked Max Weber's Protestant Ethic and explicitly compared the leading Muslim entrepreneurs of his communityto the Calvinists of an earlierera in Europe. Muslims themselves, and not just intellectuals, make such comparisons. In the Muslim world today, there is no one central figure or hierarchy of authority against whom the people are responding. There are instead many authorities, and, despite numerous claims to the contrary, no movement or individual speaks for all Muslims, but many possess the essentially modern skills of "mainstreaming" the faith.

There are four major sets of skills associated with what I call mainstreaming. The first set of skills is possessed by the intellectuals who "take charge" of developing ideas and persuading large audiences in states where organized non-governmental movements are strongly discouraged. In Syria, for example, intellectuals who act on their own, whether religious or secular, are allowed considerable liberty to write if they avoid criticism ofthe government. This includes such thinkers as Muhammad Shahrur, the secularist Sadek al-'Azm, and the Kurdish-speaking Damascene television preacher Sa'id Ramadan al-Buti.

The second set of skills is the ability to undertake the overt, “upfront” organizing of people and communicating effectively. States, including both liberal and totalitarian ones, depend on middle-class professionals just as successful religious and civic movements do, as in Indonesia and Morocco. State-sponsored efforts for fostering religious dialogue, such as the Saudi-initiated 2008 interfaith conference in Madrid[408] and the intrafaith 2004 “Amman Message” of Jordan’s King ‘Abdallah calling for moderation, are organized and managed by middle-class professionals,[409] as are non-state initiatives, such as the interfaith initiatives of the followers of Fethullah Gulen in Turkey and elsewhere.[410] Forums and associations that promote new ways of thinking and the exchange of ideas, such as the Arab Thought Forum[411] for Palestinians, represent such “upfront” organizing. The civil society debate intersects with organizing for mainstreaming Islam, but it is not simply identifiable with that debate since the focus is not on civility in and of itself or democratization, but on the “selling” of the ideas and practices of a certain way of putting faith to work in society.

A third related set of skills is the ability to work quietly behind the scenes to further an interest or cause where weak forms of civic empowerment are linked to strong forms of structure, such as in the United Arab Emirates, where major state-sponsored initiatives are underway to use the “Islamic studies” curriculum of primary and secondary schools to create a template for inculcating the values of critical thinking, gender parity, and religious tolerance. Likewise, the February 2004 revision of Moroccan family law, the mudawwana, to enhance the rights of women, was in preparation for years, but enacted only in the wake of major terrorist attacks in Casablanca in May 2003, an event that empowered the monarchy to undertake a bold major move without significant opposition.

A final set of skills is that of ensuring that publicity trumps secrecy.

Turkey’s Fethullah Gillen, initially trained as a state-sponsored preacher and recently named as one of the world’s top hundred intellectuals, has inspired a network of schools, newspapers, and radio and television outlets to convey to his followers a respect for educational excellence and religious tolerance.

Publicity can overcome the suspicion of groups and ideas, and in this way contributes significantly to “normalizing” groups and ideas. Mainstreaming, however, also exacts a price. The advocates of mainstreaming can be criticized for vagueness and a lack of specificity, especially as “mainstream” Islam often downplays cultural specificities in favor of an affirmation of individual empowerment. Opponents to mainstreaming can vaunt their outsider status. Such opposition can be tenacious. Nonetheless, the gravity of discussion has shifted significantly with the spread of mass higher education, the growing pervasiveness and increasing accessibility of the new media, and the greater ease of travel and communications in general.

The “mainstreaming” of Islam is a major change from below. It does not just emanate from key thinkers and religious leaders, but there is also resistance to such transformations. Nevertheless, there is also growing explicit, or at least tacit, acknowledgment of such conflicting views in public space. The idea of some that democracy is a fundamental tenet of Islam will take root and flower (Sulaiman 1998). Whatever the outcome, the Islamic Reformation is under way, but with more opposition than was apparent a decade ago. At least in this respect, there is a parallel with Europe’s “Reformation.” It is not a single point in time but a process.

[407] [Footnote missing in print edition]

[408] [[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lo9KMSSEZ0Y][http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lo9KMSSEZ0Y]], accessed March 17, 2010.

[409] [[http://www.csmonitor.com/World/Europe/2008/0718/p04s07-woeu.html][http://www.csmonitor.com/World/Europe/2008/0718/p04s07-woeu.html]], accessed March 18, 2010.

[410] [[http://www.ammanmessage.com/][http://www.ammanmessage.com/]], accessed March 18, 2010.

[411] [[http://www.fethullahgulen.org/][http://www.fethullahgulen.org/]], accessed March 18, 2010.

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** Wanted but not Welcome: Social Determinants of Labor Migration in the UAE

Habibui Haque Khondker

<quote>

“Migration is a courageous expression of an individual’s will to overcome adversity and live a better life.” — Kofi Annan

</quote>

Temporary migrant workers, who have played a major role in the development of the UAE, allegedly receive harsh treatment. The article asks: why do a large number of migrant workers continue to come to the UAE if the situation is so dismal? In oil-rich UAE, expatriates make up about 80 percent of the population. In construction, migrant workers constitute over 95 percent of the workforce. In the private sector, foreign professionals constitute the overwhelming majority. Foreign professionals also play an important role in the public sector. This article explores not only the political and economic circumstances around temporary labor migration but also its social and cultural underpinnings and consequences. Migrant workers often use their network of family and friends to come to the UAE and often develop a community of their own, nurturing a sense of belonging with their home country. The community network often works as a cushion against the hard living and working conditions of labor migrants. While the issues of exploitative wages and lack of rights of the migrant dominate the discourse of migrant workers, the narratives of their everyday life as they try to make the most of their situation remain somewhat underexplored. While some migrant professionals use their sojourn as a platform for further migration to more permanent locations in the West, others, especially working-class migrants, often tend to develop an ambivalent attitude as they prolong their temporary status with the support of their community networks and try to maximize their gains. This article explores the consequences of twenty-first-century globalization—the growing inter-connections, information flows, and opportunities for home visits—for the migrant population in the UAE in particular and in the Gulf region in general.

*** Introduction

The sprouting of tall structures in certain regions of the world is symbolic of economic shifts in the world. In the nineteenth century, Europe was the center of economic gravity in the world and its economic ambitions matched those of its builders. A similar overlap of economic might and skyscraping ambition was evident in the United States in the twentieth century. Today, the shift of the economic center of gravity to Asia is reflected in the presence of impressive tall structures that dot this region, from Dubai to Shanghai. The

economic crisis of 2008–09 has, to some extent, slowed the pace of real estate development. Dubai's towering Burj Khalifa, with its 818-meter height, is currently (as of 2010) the tallest building in the world. Apart from inspiring wonderment, the tower has also attracted a good deal of controversy over charges of labor exploitation in its construction. Such allegations are not too uncommon with regard to the Gulf region, which thrives on temporary migrant labor from the peripheral regions of South and Southeast Asia. In this regard, the Human Rights Watch, a New York-based watchdog group, titled one of its reports in 2006 Building Towers, Cheating Workers: Exploitation of Migrant Construction Workers in the United Arab Emirates. The report dealt with the exploitative practices to which foreign workers are subjected in the UAE, an experience not too uncommon for the toiling masses, migrants or not, all around the world. Labor implies some sort of compulsion, as Robin Cohen argues, on the basis of etymological difference between "labor" and "work" in several European languages (Cohen 2006: 13). For migrant workers, exploitation takes on a different meaning as it is often combined with political disempowerment and social exclusion. Yet, under certain conditions, despite being handicapped by tremendous odds, migrant workers try to mobilize themselves and protest. Their protests indicate that they have reached their breaking point.

In the last five years, migrant workers in Dubai organized a number of protests and strikes over non-payment or irregular payment of wages. According to newspaper reports, about 3,000 protesting workers, mostly South Asian, went on the rampage at their company's project site. Workers in other locations expressed solidarity with them.[412][413] Earlier reports in the foreign media presented a similar picture. The Observer of London reported those protests and strikes:

<quote>

[I]n the biggest outbreak of public dissent in the UAE's history, thousands of workers rioted at the construction site for the Burj Dubai Tower. Angered by withheld of payments and mistreatment by their employers, some 2,500 laborers turned on their bosses and the local police, smashing cars and offices on the site and causing an estimated $1 million of damage. In a sympathy strike a day later, thousands of laborers working at Dubai International Airport laid down their tools.

</quote>

Sometimes, the protests resulted in the repatriation of the so-called troublemakers.[414] But there are also instances of labor protests that evoke sympathy from the law-enforcement authorities. In the midst of one such protest, a senior police officer commented:

<quote>

Labor protests have been increasing in Dubai with the construction boom, mostly with big companies that employ many workers, more than 5,000 sometimes. Most protests—99 per cent of the time—are over delayed wages. People come here to find their bread, to support their families. I don’t blame them for protesting.[415]

</quote>

Why is it that despite such inhospitable treatment, the UAE continues to be a favorite destination for migrant workers from South and Southeast Asia? In the context of the complex trajectories of exploitation, powerlessness, and protest, this article attempts to answer the following questions: Why do workers continue to flood into the UAE? In this age of rapid, inexpensive, and easy communication, the news of working conditions and labor relations in the UAE cannot remain a secret in South Asia. The article explores the social determinants of labor migration to the UAE. It begins by unpacking labor migration by viewing migrants as a multi-class group, as a highly nuanced and differentiated social category. Although there may be some advantages to examining the class bases of migrant workers, especially working-class migrants, as a social category, this article focuses on the national and ethnic bases of migrants who often form a social category or community of their own. Migrant workers, both skilled and unskilled, the working classes, as well as middle-class professionals from Bangladesh are treated as temporary migrants. In the context of the UAE in particular and the Gulf region in general, granting of citizenship is highly restrictive. This sojourner status justifies lumping the migrants into a larger category rather than viewing them in specific class terms. In short, the migrants as a group share a common d’asporic status despite their class differences. Yet class background cannot be brushed aside completely. Middle-class professionals

have options for further migration; the working class individual has the option of returning home and then returning to the UAE or proceeding to another destination where he or she can find work. Thus, the article takes into account the class, status, and cultural dimensions of the migrants in exploring the social determinants of their migration decisions and their experiences as migrants.

Particular empirical attention is given to migrants from Bangladesh. The article explores how migrant workers and professionals try to understand the social context of, and the basis for, their decision to migrate, and how they negotiate, cope, and deal with seemingly unfavorable circumstances while trying to maximize their gains in the face of huge challenges. How do they cope? To whom do they turn for assistance? How do they build solidarity and forge alliances to turn disadvantages into advantages:' I use the phrase social determinants to capture the factors outlined above. The article explores how different classes and. status groups deal with processes, such as social exclusion, from their respective class locations. How does the migration process help in class and/or status attainment? The migrants are a differentiated group who share some common experience, yet possessing divergent class interests and life-chances. The larger.context of globalization facilitates the mobility ofthe middle class, just as it restricts opportunities for the working class. Yet the relative ease of travel, thanks to the services of budget airlines, and Internet-mediated communication have enabled the working classes to maintain closer links with family members left behind in their countries of origin.

In focusing on the everyday life of migrants, this article draws upon ethnographic work on Bangladeshi migrant workers, their tales of coping and surviving (Jahan and Khondker 2008), as well as additional interview material and secondary data. The ethnographic research of Sulayman Khalfan and Saad Alkobaisi (1999) on the coping strategies of migrant workers in the UAE provides a good starting point. The work of Rima Shaban (2001) on female domestic workers makes an important contribution. Ethnographic studies on migrants (Constable 1997; 1999) have also guided this study. Indepth, semi-structured interviews with twelve Indians, thirty Bangladeshis, and twelve Filipinos provide additional data. The article also focuses on the institutional linkages and structures that shape the processes of labor migration. It looks

at individuals and their agency, but does not neglect the broader structures of society.

*** Conceptual Framework

The article frames the discussion in the context of globalization theories, in particular the interface between the local/national and the global. In this regard, the article draws upon not the simplistic version of globalization, i.e., globalization that creates a homogenized “flat world” Friedman (2005) or a borderless world (Ohmae, 1994); but rather a more nuanced, sociological understanding of globalization. Hence theoretical insights of Robertson (1992), Appadurai (1996), Tomlinson (1999), Therborn (2000), Nederveen Pieterse (2000, 2009), Castels (2002, 2007), and Turner and Khondker (2010) are employed. These theories highlight flows as well as ebbs, connectivity as well as disjuncture, homogeneity as well as heterogeneity, as hallmarks of globalization. The movement of people across borders reflects the present condition of globalization both as cause and consequence. When people move across geo-cultural spaces, they do not necessarily leave behind their home cultures. Often they move along with their local cultures and then nurture these in distant lands. Here Robertson’s concept of glocalization Robertson (1995), and Giulianotti and Robertson 2006) is particularly apt. Migrant communities—especially sojourners—are more likely to transplant their local cultures in the temporary places of their residence. The experiences of labor migrants in the UAE provides evidence of glocalization, shedding new light on our understanding of the links between globalization and migration. The notion of globalization as simultaneously “widening cooperation and deepening inequality” (Nederveen Pieterse 2000, 2009) also informs the conceptual framework of this study.

There is no denying that politico-economic forces shape migration processes. In the UAE, behind the construction and building boom lies oil. In recent years, as the price of oil has climbed steadily, peaking at US$147 in July 2008, the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states have generated a cumulative surplus of US$1.1 trillion, according to IMF estimates, compared to only US$90 billion in the preceding seven-year period. Much of this cash is being directed toward much-needed infrastructure projects such as roads and ports, as well as tourism developments, including vast hotels and

shopping malls, and more down-to-earth residential and commercial properties. Although the global economic crisis of 2008–09 has slowed down the frenzy of this construction boom (especially in Dubai), much of the infrastructural development is on course.

Since the 1970s, there has been a significant increase in the number of migrants working in the GCC states, namely Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE. The GCC states have among the highest number of migrants as a share of population in the world, according to a study conducted at the Gulf Research Centre. In the first half of the first decade of this century some 10 million foreigners lived in the GCC states. Migration Information Source (2004). By now, that figure has been surpassed. According to a study by the Gulf Research Centre, the expatriate workforce is as follows: UAE 88 percent; Qatar 83 percent; Kuwait 81 percent; Saudi Arabia 72 percent; Bahrain 55 percent; and Oman 54 percent.[416] The construction and real-estate boom led to a major influx of labor migrants to the region. Of the GCC's six members, Saudi Arabia has 8 million foreign workers. Of the 2.3 million workers in the construction sector, 93 percent are non-Saudis. In the UAE, it is estimated that 95 percent of construction workers are non-Emiratis. In all the labor-receiving Gulf States, which have experienced a development boom, foreign workers play a key role.

The exact number of expatriate workers and their source countries are hard to determine. Based on an estimate in 2005, we can have some idea. In 2005, 2,738,000 foreign workers worked in the UAE, which marked an increase of 17 percent from the previous year. In all, 246,420 companies hired one or more foreign workers in 2005.[417] Based on the estimates from ten consulates and embassies, there were between 2.8 to 3.4 million expatriates living in the UAE in 2005.

Table 1. Estimates of Foreign Workers in UAE 2005-

| Country | 2005 | 2010 (estimate) |

| India | 1.1. million | |

| Pakistan | 750,000 | |

| Bangladesh | 400,000 to 500,000 | 600,000 to 700,000 |

| Iran | 300,000 to 400,000 | |

| Jordan | 200,000 | |

| Philippines | 200,000 | |

| Sri Lanka | 150,000 | |

| U.K. | 120,000 | |

| Nepal | 60,00G | |

| Lebanon | 60,000 | |

The estimates are made by the respective embassies.

While the argument of exploitation is a well-rehearsed one in the literature, stemming from Marxist and neo-Marxist analyses, with implications for our understanding of globalization as a world dominated by exploitative capitalism, the literature lacks a well-rounded and integrated approach where social and cultural factors in migration are given due credit. Rather than featuring working-class people as the proverbial heroes in the true spirit of Marxist analysis, they are presented as defeated people who have no choice but to allow themselves to be victims of a diabolical economic system.

In a similar economically deterministic vein, yet coming exactly from the opposite end of the ideological spectrum, there are others who are relentless in their defense of the benefits of the market-driven free flow of migration around the world. For UN experts and World Bank pundits, international migration is increasingly seen as a force for development. Reports show that remittances sent by migrants to their families exceed the official development assistance (ODA) received by some of these countries and constitute the largest single source of financial flows to developing countries, often exceeding foreign direct investment (FDI) in many countries. John

Maynard Keynes, the English economist, said more than half a century ago that “migration is the first act against poverty.” The 2009 report of the World Bank’s Migration and Remittances Team indicated that remittances worldwide reached US$338 billion in 2008, with India topping the list with US$52 billion, followed closely by China with US$49 billion and Mexico with US$26 billion (Ratha et al. 2009). Remittances to India increased to US$55 billion in 2009, making the country the biggest recipient of money from overseas migrant workers. India has been the world’s top remittance earner for more than ten years. The remittance income was just $2 billion a year in the late 1980s.[418] On a per capita basis as well as on the basis of remittance income as a proportion of income from export revenues, the Philippines was ahead. Migrant workers remitted US$19 billion to the economy of the Philippines in 2009. In Bangladesh, migrant workers remitted 9 billion dollars in 2008, which was the highest source of foreign currency income. If Bangladesh can harness its pool of migrant workers, the gains may surpass those of the much-celebrated microfinance sector in that country.

Every year, US$10 billion flows out of the UAE in remittances, the hard-earned wages of migrant laborers sent home to their impoverished families. Even this sum is dwarfed, however, by the staggering US$338 billion that poured into developing countries in remittances in 2008, as estimated by the World Bank, which compares with the US$100 billion available in accumulated global aid.[419] World Bank Vice President Francois Bourguignon (2006) remarked that remittances arising from international migration have, in general, a beneficial effect on poverty reduction, child health outcomes, and school attendance in the receiving families. For example, remittances may have reduced the share of poor people in the population by 11 percent in Uganda and by 6 percent in Bangladesh. Remittancereceiving households have lower school dropout rates in Sri Lanka. In his remarks, Bourguignon cautioned that remittances should not be seen as a substitute for the ODA that many of these countries need.

Yet the process of migration is fraught with risks, ranging from ruthless exploitation to outright cheating by middlemen, to being trafficked into forced prostitution and other hazardous employment. Often in this chain of exploitation and oppression, middlemen work in cahoots with government officials. The so-called manpower agents in both labor-sending and

laborreceiving countries receive protection from their respective governments. The issue touches on the broader question of governance. Failing states such as Myanmar are places where workers remain most vulnerable and where local people turn to migration (to Thailand and Malaysia) as a solution to the problems of poverty and oppression. There have been several reported cases involving the transportation of migrant workers. In one instance, several migrant women from Myanmar died in s van of suffocation while being transported to Thailand. In another, Rohyngas from the disputed borderland between Bangladesh and Myanmar were caught by Thai police and their boat was forced to drift on the high seas. Alongside these examples of great human tragedy and human rights violation are happier stories of class and status mobility and empowerment because of the risks that people take in making migratory choices.

There is no denying the importance of economic motivation, ranging from the need to secure employment and income at any cost to the desire for income enhancement for paving the way for class mobility. Nevertheless, social factors facilitating migration and the social consequences of such labor mobility are also important, and cannot be reduced to a narrow economistic explanation. If one examines labor mobility, rather than migration, which has the connotation of fixity, one see that it must be located as a marker of the processes of globalization, the growing interconnectedness of the world. While, the political economy lies at the base, social and cultural factors in the new globalization also play an important part. The social consequences of migration include both status attainment and status loss, as well as a certain ambiguity with regard to social mobility. The social consequences also include a growing chasm between generations.

The incorporation of social and cultural factors into an understanding of the phenomenon of migration is of particular importance in the context of the Gulf countries, where building a modern (or even a postmodern) economic system without changing the concomitant social and cultural practices presents interesting and rare opportunities for examining the nuances of such an interface. Often the high-tech infrastructure of the service economy is grafted onto a feudal social milieu.

The issue of citizenship, for example, provides a good illustration. In a number of societies focused on enlarging their share of the knowledge economy, important changes have been made to attract young foreign-born professionals by granting them permanent residence and citizenship status. Singapore, for example, has successfully pursued a course of attracting “foreign talents” by easing the immigration process. It is important to note the differences in terminology. In the UAE, official terms such as “nonnational” rather than “non-resident,” and “temporary contract labor” rather than “migrant worker,” are used. The use of these terms underlines the transient nature of these people’s movement or stay in the destination country and reveals a reluctance to change citizenship rules to make them more new-economy friendly. This also adds to the underlying difficulties in conceptualizing the ambiguity of the foreign worker’s situation in the UAE. Such questions as who is a migrant worker, who is a professional, and who is a likely candidate for naturalized citizenship in the future are addressed by more bureaucratic states like Singapore by deploying differential visa categories and by imposing a rigid yet transparent system of laws. The genealogy of state formation in the UAE is a different from that of the transformation of the post-colonial states in South and Southeast Asia.

Migration is a result of a complex set of social, economic, political, and cultural processes. Often a combination of factors drives people to migrate. There are various types of migrants: permanent and temporary; voluntary and involuntary, the extreme form of which is the refugee. There are international migrants and refugees, as well as internally displaced persons.

The latter group is often a product of civil war or social unrest. Again, many of these categories have lost some of their certainty or validity in an increasingly mobile world. The conventional dynamic of the push and pull factors no longer presents an either/or situation for the migrant worker. Very often, migrant workers from the labor-sending countries are simultaneously pushed and pulled, blurring the sharp divide between the binary categories.

The presence of the large number of temporary migrant workers in the UAE is an instance of the new globalization and population mobility. Apart from the politico-economic underpinnings of this process, cultural and social factors play an important role. For example, in the UAE, a drive for developing the health care infrastructure, including hospitals and medical centers, has created a demand for nurses and technical support workers from India and the Philippines, since Emirati women cannot work in these sectors because of social practices of gender segregation. In the UAE, broadly, the service industries such as airlines, hotels, and tourism are heavily dependent on female workers from the Philippines, China, and East European countries because not only is there an absence of economic incentives for the Emirati women to work in these sectors, but also the local culture is averse to Emirati women taking up these positions. Emirati culture, with its strong patriarchal leanings, restricts Emirati women's employment in certain public sectors and in the government-linked private sector, and demands continued gender segregation in the workplace.

The link between globalization and migration is manifested in the huge numbers of people who cross international borders regularly in search of jobs. Cross-border labor migration in the Gulf region highlights some of the complexities of the dynamics of the processes of migration and globalization. Stephen Castles and Mark Miller (2003) provide the following propositions linking globalization with migration: more and more countries are being involved in migration; a large number of people are being caught up in migration; varieties of migration (seasonal, permanent, semi-permanent, etc.) are rendering migration into a highly differentiated phenomenon; increasing feminization of migration as more and more women are drawn into the migration circuit; and growing political controversies over migration. To this I add the following: more people are on the move from one destination country to other destination countries; migration in the old days implied a change of place (movement of people from the country of origin to the country of destination), but now the country of destination has become a moving target. In international migration, some countries serve as a platform for further migration. For professionals, the Gulf countries in general, and the UAE in particular, play the role of a launching pad for further migration to North America and Australia.

Millions of people now live in places where they were not born. According to the International Organization for Migration (IOM), worldwide there were 214 million migrants in 2008, representing 3.1 percent ofthe world's population (IOM 2010). The equivalent figure in 1960 was 75 million people or 2.5 percent of the world's population. Almost one in every ten people living in the more developed regions is a migrant. In the Gulf region, the distinction between temporary and permanent migration is blurred. Almost all of the more than dozen Bangladeshi professionals I have interviewed have spent thirty years or more of their professional life in the UAE on a temporary visa, renewable until the age of retirement.

For Castles and his colleagues, the volume of migration—the sheer number of people on the move—has become historically high. Aristide Zolberg, however, offers a contrary view. "The popular notion that the late twentieth century was "the age of migration" (Castles and Miller 1993) has to be qualified in light of the fact that the proportion of the foreign- born remained at the same level between 1965 and 2000, approximately 2 3 percent, indicating that international migration grew slightly faster than world population." (Zolberg 2006: 232). A look at the percentage of the population in the circuit of migration shows that there has not been a major shift. The shift is apparently minor. For social scientists, however, the volume of migrants and their role in changing the demographic composition in the country of settlement has its own force, which qualifies for scholarly attention. If all migrants had a state of their own, with a population size of 214 million, it would be the fifth largest country in the world, following China, India, the USA, and Indonesia.

What is worth rethinking is the dynamics of the global-national interface resulting from such huge flows of people. One could agree with Zolberg that the problematization of migration shows the growing salience of the state rather than that of globalization. In the earlier phases of migration history, people could move more freely. The only restriction came from the migrants' own states of origin, which sought to create and consolidate state power. Even those who are skeptical ofthe notion of globalization, and consider it to be an exaggerated claim, cannot ignore the fact that in almost every society, that is, a nation-state, there are a large number of residents who were born outside the country. It can be said without any ambiguity that migration has become the most visible face of globalization.

Obviously, one could argue that the movement of people from one place to another is nothing new and that historically there has been a natural flow of people, for example, during harvests. Indeed, our ancestors moved from place to place in groups for a better life. And, at least in theory, people could move more freely across geographical boundaries until the invention ofthe passport and the monopolization ofthe control ofthe means of movement by the state in the nineteenth century. In Europe, until World War I, the movement of people took place quite freely. During and after World War I, as mass travel expanded and as borders became more rigorously guarded, the regulation and monitoring of human movement by the state became more determined (Torpey 1998: 254).

Historically, migration has been the normal condition. People migrated in large numbers from Africa to the rest of the world. Asian migrants populated the Arctic and reached North America centuries before the continental drift. Similarly, in Europe, seasonal migration was common, for example, as fishermen moved in response to the herring season along the coasts of northern Europe. The modern world is different. Since the invention of the passport and the worker permit, workers cannot move around freely in search of work, because nation-state boundaries cannot be crossed without formal identification and official permission. In this sense, “guests” have become “aliens” (Sassen 1999).

In the twentieth century, alongside forced involuntary migration caused by war, civil strife, slavery, indentured servitude, and natural disasters, voluntary migration grew enormously. At the beginning of the twenty-first century, owing to a combination of factors such as relatively cheap air travel, expansion of job opportunities, falling birth rates in some countries, and the availability of surplus populations in other countries, more and more people are becoming increasingly mobile. What is unique about migration in the age of the new globalization, or twenty-first-century globalization (Nederveen Pieterse 2009), is that more people are migrating between Asian countries. The recent trend is the growth in South-South migration. Another distinctive feature is that the migrants’ movements, unlike in the past, are closely documented and surveyed. Controversies over the undocumented movement of people are an affirmation of the importance of documentation

and surveillance. Economist Jeffery Williamson (1998) points out that the world economy of the 1970s was similar to the movement of capital and labor in the 1870s. However, in the 1870s, the migration of people, despite the social cost, yielded economic benefits for both the country of settlement as well as the home country.

Migrants are also important vehicles for transmitting “social remittances,” including new ideas, products, information, technology, and, as seen in the case of Bangladesh, innovative entrepreneurship. However, while migration can aid development and reduce poverty, it can also broaden social inequity, particularly in the sending countries. Discussions of the benefits and costs of migration typically focus on the economic aspect. However, there are significant social costs of migration that are not always given due attention: children without mothers, husbands without wives, elderly relatives without anyone to care for them. The migration of mothers often results in children dropping out of school or finding themselves in situations of neglect or abuse (Batistella and Conaco 1998). The separation of spouses and the parting of parents and children have implications for family stability that are felt in both the countries of origin and destination.

*** The Political Economy of Global Migration

When it comes to understanding the plight of foreign workers, the Marxist interpretation of exploitation of labor provides a useful analytical framework. The Marxist theory of surplus value extraction through labor exploitation explains to a large extent the direction of labor movements.

The trajectory of global migration reflects the unevenness of the global political and economic structure. While uneven economic development in different nation-states is an important reason for migration, there are also important political and social processes both in the sending and receiving countries that determine the flow of migration. Clearly, the direction of migration flow is from the South to the North, although recent trends suggest an increase in South-South migration flow. The labor migration to the Gulf region is part of the increasing intra-Asian migration flow. About 60 percent of all migrants are now found in the world’s most prosperous countries and

the remaining 40 percent in the developing countries (Report ofthe Global Commission on International Migration, 2007).

When market forces have free rein, workers tend to be exposed to high levels of exploitation, especially in the labor-surplus regions of the world. The Marxist notion of a reserve army of surplus labor helps explain the low wages —determined by the market— in countries such as Bangladesh, India, and the Philippines. Employers would often like to pay workers as little wages as possible to ensure maximum profits for themselves. The wage paid to involuntary labor is sufficient only to keep the worker alive. Here the role of the state becomes crucial. The state, which is responsible, formally at least, for protecting all classes of people within its borders, is bound to take into account the interests of workers. In labor-exporting countries where there is some democracy, as in the Philippines, the government takes many legal measures to secure and protect the interests of its migrant workers. In addition, of course, there is an economic interest that needs to be protected since remittances from overseas workers constitute a substantial proportion of the Philippines economy. The Philippines has adopted a proactive labor export or out-migration strategy since the mid-1970s under President Marcos. In the first decade of the twenty-first century, Filipinas worked as domestic workers in over 130 countries around the world (Parrenas 2001: 1). It is estimated that there are eight million workers—both domestic as well as non-domestic—known as Overseas Foreign Workers (OFW) from the Philippines who play an important role in the country's economy. The political economy paradigm may explain why Filipino migrants have spread out all over the world. However, it is unable to explain the existence of surplus labor, which may have something to do with the strong grip of Catholicism, which forbids the use of contraception. As a Roman Catholic society with a high birth rate, the Philippines has a surplus workforce that cannot find local employment because of limited investment opportunities and a weak economy, and hence the export of its own workers provides one economic solution—however paradoxical—to the country's demographic problems.

As oil revenue in the 1970s underwrote massive development projects, attracting a large number of migrant workers, the fall in oil prices in 1980–85 did not lead to drastic layoffs of migrant workers, although it slowed down their influx. In some other GCC countries, internal dynamics played an important role. For example, in the early stage of Bahrain's development,

Iranian workers came to work in the country in such large numbers that it prompted the Shah of Iran to claim Bahrain as part of Iran. Since that claim, and the fear it generated among the leaders of Bahrain, the country has consciously recruited large numbers of people from faraway South Asia, especially India. In a number of years, the ethnic background of the majority of migrant workers in Bahrain shifted from Iranian to Indian.

Migration raises interesting questions about the relationship between market forces and state authority. It is the classic law of demand and supply in action, dictating the movement of people across national boundaries. However, the state in the receiving countries by not legislating minimum wages supports the play of market forces, which protect the interests of employers. In this regard, safeguarding the interests of its own citizens is the justification for the existence of the state. The sending states also play a role in sometimes promoting the interests of migrant workers by providing all kinds of assistance to them, or by restricting their movement in the event that there is a possibility of workers falling into exploitative situations or coming to harm.

A large number of Chinese workers began coming to the Gulf following the opening up of the Chinese economy in the late 1970s. In the 1980s, this process began slowly, but by the 1990s, when economic growth gathered momentum, large numbers of Chinese began trying their luck in the Gulf. In Nepal, following the end of the Maoist civil war, which led to the abolition of the monarchy and the inauguration of democracy, and with Maoist leaders at the helm of affairs, many former fighters became outbound and found jobs in the Gulf. In recent years, a large number of Indonesian women have joined the migrant female workforce, especially in domestic service in the Gulf, following economic reforms, withdrawal of state subsidies, and general political unrest in their country. The shifting trends in the source countries of migrant workers tell us as much about the political and social forces in the labor-sending countries as they do about the nature of market demands in the labor-receiving countries.

There has been a shift from the regional to the international, from Middle Eastern and African to South Asian and Southeast Asian migrant workers.

There has been an influx of domestic workers from the Philippines and Indonesia, complementing the traditional sources such as South Asia, Sudan,

<br’and Ethiopia. Many female drivers from the Philippines in the UAE drive around the female members of the Emirati household.

*** Human Trafficking: A Deviant Form of Migration

Human trafficking may be considered a consequence of “the commoditization of migration,” which has been identified by both international human rights groups and by the UAE government as one of the most serious problems—a new form of slavery—in the present world. This practice exposes some of the ill-effects of uncontrolled neoliberal globalization. The International Organization for Migration (IOM) calls human trafficking the “most menacing form of irregular migration due to its ever increasing scale and complexity involving, as it does, arms, drugs and prostitution.” In this shady operation, precise figures are difficult to come by. The International Labor Organization (ILO) estimates that each year between 700,000 and 2 million women and children are trafficked across national borders around the world. In the Middle East, rich countries such as Saudi Arabia have become sites where children from extremely poor countries such as Yemen are traded as involuntary sex workers or domestic servants.

In the Trafficking in Persons Report of 2007, published by the State Department of the United States government, former Secretary of the State Rice says, “Trafficking in persons is a modern-day form of slavery, a new type of global slave trade. Perpetrators prey on the most weak among us, primarily women and children, for profit and gain. They lure victims into involuntary servitude and sexual slavery.”

Human trafficking also perpetuates child labor, transforming children into a global commodity. Other pernicious aspects of human trafficking are child soldiers and child prostitutes. According to UNICEF, more than 300,000 children under the age of eighteen are currently being exploited in more than thirty countries. While the majority of child soldiers are between the ages of fifteen and eighteen years, some soldiers are as young as seven or eight

years.[420] “Child sex tourism is a dark side of globalization, with some two million children exploited in the global commercial sex trade,” according to the 2007 TIP Report.[421]

In the Gulf region, the private sponsorship system or kafala is often blamed for the degrading terms and conditions under which the migrant working class works and lives. The kafala system is a non-governmental system for recruiting foreigners working in the Gulf Arab economies, which rely heavily on cheap foreign labor, mostly recruited from the countries of the Indian subcontinent. The system allows expatriate workers to enter, work, and leave the host country only with the permission or assistance of their sponsor. On the positive side, the system is very flexible and helps avoid bureaucratic procedures in matching the needs of the employer with those of the worker.

On the negative side, many sponsors and their agents routinely exploit the system to make money illegally. International organizations such as the ILO and other human rights groups have demanded the abolition of this system for some time. The kafala system, which is common to all Gulf countries, has long been criticized by human rights groups for placing workers at the mercy of their employers. Employers usually take employees’ passports when the latter enter the country and sometimes use possession of the travel documents to extort a large fee before the workers can leave the country. When Bahrain scrapped the private sponsorship system, it was heralded as the end of slavery. Bahraini Labor Minister Majeed al-Alawi explained that the main change in the regulations would mean that foreign workers would hr sponsored directly by the Labor Authority and would not have to rely on their employers.

Labor ministers of other Gulf countries have agreed that the present sponsorship system needs to be overhauled. While abolishing the sponsorship system may be a positive step toward the rationalization of the process, there are beneficiaries of the kafala system as well. At least half a dozen of the respondents who work as domestic help and hold related household jobs could negotiate not only their continued tenure with their “arbabs” or sponsors, but some of them also managed to persuade their employers to help bring their siblings from Bangladesh. In the span of three

years, a domestic maid was able to arrange sponsorship from her employer for two sisters and one brother. Their collective income plays an important role in changing the economic situation of their family in Bangladesh. They have pooled their savings to construct a house. In another case, a Bangladeshi “nathur” (caretaker of apartments), using his personal contacts with a shop owner, a Syrian businessman, arranged to procure work visas for two brothers. Here, too, family networks used the non-official, private channels of migration to their advantage.

Working-class migrants have their own hierarchy. A skilled migrant worker from the Philippines is able to come to the UAE on a “visit visa” and then he o’ she can find work with the help of the family and friendship network. For a Filipino migrant, the financial cost of migration is much lower than it is for, say, a Bangladeshi worker. “Tin Tin,” (not real name) a Filipina, paid the equivalent of 1,500 dirhams (US$411) in agency fees to find work in Abu Dhabi. She paid for her own tickets. A Bangladeshi worker, for similar work, had to pay an agent in Dhaka the equivalent of US$3,000. For a Bangladeshi, or for that matter a South Asian, visit visas are not available. The Bangladeshi must procure a work visa before landing in the UAE.

Over the years, the makeup of migrants has changed as South and Southeast Asian migrant workers, who now constitute as much as 90 percent of the foreign workforce in some GCC states, have replaced Arab migrants as the main type of migrants. The kafala system has become the legal basis for residency and employment. Migrant workers receive an entry visa and a residence permit only if a GCC citizen or institution employs them. Sponsorship requires the sponsor-employer to assume full economic and legal responsibility for the employee during the contract period. The worker can only work for the sponsor and remains entirely dependent on the sponsor to remain in the country.

In many GCC states, sponsors are legally allowed to confiscate the passports of employees until their contract has ended. Bahrain’s Labor Minister, Majeed al-Alawi, likened the current system to slavery. Women employed in domestic service are particularly vulnerable. If an employee sues the sponsor for violating labor practices, there is generally no form of unemployment protection while the case is pending in the legal system. And even if the

worker wins the case, the usual result is for the sponsor contract to be terminated, causing the worker to leave the country.

Gulf governments have historically welcomed migrant workers on the assumption that their nationals will not take up certain jobs that they consider to be beneath them. Despite this, Majeed al-Alawi told BBC Arabic radio that the new system would form part of a broader initiative to put a ceiling on the number of expatriate workers in Bahrain.

The blurring of boundaries between labor migration and human trafficking is illustrated by the statement of the Minister of Labor of the UAE, who said that giving wages below the amount promised and tricking the worker to take up work different from that which had been promised ought to be treated as trafficking. According to that definition, a much larger number of migrant workers in the UAE can be said to have been trafficked.

*** Human Rights Discourse and Migrants

The issue of the rights of migrant workers has received international attention and is a subject of debate in many labor-receiving countries. The controversy is rooted in the existential condition of the workers. They are the classic “others.” Yet, unlike other “others,” they cannot be discarded or dispensed with easily. Migrant workers everywhere are faced with this dilemma. In the words of Stephen Castle: “The migrant has always been the “other” of the nation-state, who could undermine the myths of cultural homogeneity and national identity. In the era of globalization, states welcome flows of capital, trade and know-how, yet frequently reject flows of people” (Castles 1998: 7). For Gulf countries, especially the UAE given its demographic reality, there is little alternative to receiving large inflows of migrant workers. It is this paradoxical location that is best captured in Zolberg’s phrase: they are “wanted but not welcome.”

International organizations such as the ILO, which was founded on the principle of social justice as a promoter of peace in the wake of the Versailles Treaty in 1919 (now an institution of the United Nations but predating the

establishment of that body), the IOM, and the Human Rights Watch, a New York-based human rights organization, keep a close watch on the conditions of migrant workers. The US State Department publishes annually a countryspecific report on the situation of human trafficking around the world, which ranks countries on a scale. The ILO proposed the decent work clause: “Opportunities for all men and women of working age, including migrant workers, to obtain decent and productive work in conditions of freedom, equity, security and human dignity should be promoted.” The agenda of the ILO includes the following: “The human rights of all migrant workers, regardless of their status, should be promoted and protected.” It defines forced labor as “the antithesis of decent work.” Forced labor, according to the ILO, comprises “two basic elements: the work or service is extracted under the menace of a penalty and it is undertaken involuntarily” (ILO 2009: 5). If this definition were followed strictly, several categories of tasks performed by foreign workers would be classified as forced labor.

In a globalized world, nation-states, regardless of their wealth and influence, can hardly ignore such external evaluations. In other words, migration generates a whole host of issues that are connected to the politico-economic realities of the present world. For example, countries such as the ones in the Gulf that have never had to deal with organized labor movements within their own borders are now faced with demands—sometimes disorganized rather than organized unionism—by foreign workers with the blessings of international human rights organizations.

The UAE, which wants to promote itself as a major destination for cultural tourism, has launched ambitious projects, such as setting up famous worldclass museums designed by world-class architects on an island called Saadiyat Island, literally “island of happiness.” In 2009, Human Rights Watch published a report titled The Island of Happiness: Exploitation of Migrant Workers on Saadiyat Island, Abu Dhabi, wherein it criticized the UAE government for resorting to forced labor, for not providing adequate wages to workers, and for even confiscating their passports. The UAE Minister of State for Foreign Affairs responded as follows: “The UAE is particularly surprised and disappointed by HRW’s attempts to sensationalize the drawbacks in the country’s labor policies into media sound bites, without consideration of the rapid strides that have been made over the past few years.”[422]

In response, Human Rights Watch followed an innovative tactic. They planned to take their campaign to Paris, home of the Louvre Museum, and to New York, home of New York University (NYU), as both these institutions are supposed to set up their overseas branches on the island of happiness. NYU officials immediately responded by committing that they would ensure that the construction of their facilities would adhere to decent work conditions. What is interesting to note is that the HRW officials came to Abu Dhabi and held a press conference at a local hotel to expose the violation of the rights of foreign workers in the UAE. The event itself shows a high degree of tolerance. As a newspaper editorial put it: “It is a measure of the country’s openness that HRW has been allowed to expose shortcomings where they occur, and it is the Government that has done [the] most to address workers’ welfare in recent years — not only responding to the criticism but [also] proactively identifying problems and solutions.”[423]

Human rights, since their formal proclamation in 1948, have been promoted as universal rights. The relationship between the social rights of national citizenship and the human rights of the U.N. Declaration provides useful insights on whether sociology can provide concepts and theories that function across conceptual and territorial boundaries. Human rights discourse may prove to be the primary candidate for sociology to operate as an effective discourse of global social reality. Some organizations working for the protection of workers’ rights are based in Asia. For example, the Asian Migrant Centre, a Hong Kong-based network that works to protect the human rights of migrant workers, is a key player in this area. The Hong Kong Declaration asserts their support for the Manila Declaration, expressing their solidarity and commitment to “imagine and construct an alternative world based on the fundamental principles respecting human rights and human dignity.”[424] The Asian Migrant Centre has a Migrants Human Rights (MHR) Program, which is an umbrella organization of seven migrant workers’ organizations and unions. Yet, by and large, migrant workers are outside the sphere of trade unions. They have hardly any bargaining power and remain vulnerable to exploitation. Domestic workers in the UAE as in many other Asian countries get differential salaries based on their nationality. In Singapore for example, newspapers advertise these differential salaries publicly. These differential salaries are often based on the social perception of the domestic workers. In the UAE, many households employ domestic

workers from different countries allocating different roles in the household. The social hierarchy of the household employees in the UAE provides insight into social construction of migrant workers.

Over the years, the Gulf countries have come to deal with the external evaluation of the human rights issues more professionally.. The UAE and other Gulf states have been under close scrutiny by the Human Rights Watch. It is well worth pointing out that every time HRW publishes a critical review of the UAE, appropriate actions and interventions follow, showing that these accusations are taken seriously. The UAE hardly ever takes a defensive stand. Indeed, the UAE government has played an active role in combating human trafficking by financially supporting NGO activities and by being a sponsor of the Vienna initiative. UAE officials met representatives of other countries in Vienna in February 2008 to discuss the problem and to hammer out effective solutions. The UAE government has also provided financial support to the United Nations Global Initiative for Fighting Human Trafficking or UN.GIFT, which was launched in March 2007 by the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC). A national committee called the UAE National Committee to Combat Human Trafficking (NCCHT) was set up under the leadership of Dr Anwar Gargash, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, and the Federal National Council (FNC). Its official Web site (www. nccht.gov.ae) seeks to promote public awareness of human trafficking. The Web site even has a feedback or “contact us” feature through which one can contact officials to report cases of trafficking and abuse. While the UAE has demonstrated its commitment and taken positive steps to combat this menace, some international reports have undermined the government’s efforts, commented Dr Gargash.[425] The US State Department in 2008 placed Bahrain in tier two—out ofthree tiers—of its annual human trafficking report for not fully complying with minimum standards to stop the trafficking of people for forced labor or for the sex trade. Such external evaluations have both negative and positive consequences. On the positive side, they often trigger concrete actions. In a globalized world no country wants to be portrayed as blatantly ignoring the issues of human rights.

*** Citizenship, State-Belonging, and Cosmopolitan Identity

Migrants to industrially developed countries often seek permanent resident status and citizenship. Because of the high mobility of people across nations, many countries now accept dual citizenship. Professionals with expertise in certain specialized fields are in high demand in many countries, and some countries offer incentives to attract these specialists. For instance, Indian software engineers can be seen in many countries.

In the UAE, eight out often people are migrants. Although the economic dynamic accounts for such a high percentage of migrants in the country, the presence of such a large group has social and political consequences for Emirati society. The discussion of citizenship rights, labor rights, and democracy takes on a different meaning in such a context. In some contexts, migration of labor takes place strictly at a temporary contractual level, for example, as in the UAE or Singapore, where 20 percent of the population is migrant. European countries such as Germany had a well-developed program for accepting guest workers, but such people rarely acquired citizenship through naturalization. In Europe and the USA, the issue of migration is closely tied to the issue of citizenship.

In the UAE, although migration has not been linked to the citizenship question, it has remained a contested political issue from the human rights point of view. Different countries follow different rules with regard to granting citizenship status. Some countries follow highly restrictive policies. In the Gulf region, citizenship is not an option, while countries like Singapore have a selective citizenship policy. Professionals are given permanent resident status on a short-term basis, but foreign laborers are rarely granted citizenship. Workers in a lower income bracket are not allowed to bring their family members. The Singaporean policy is based on an implicitly meritocratic ideology, which welcomes “talent” but believes that such talent is only concentrated among people in certain age groups and racial communities. Singapore attempts, therefore, to avoid, or at least delay, the problems of an ageing workforce that is increasingly dependent on social benefits.

Citizenship implies the rights and entitlements of citizens vis-a-vis the modern state. Minimally, “citizenship is an international filing system, a mechanism for allocating persons to states” (Brubaker 1992: 31). Citizenship

also implies a sense of belonging. A sense of belonging to a state and the rights and entitlements underwritten by a state are often the two criteria of a conventional understanding of the state. For migrant families, there is a growing disjuncture between citizenship in the juridical sense and statebelonging in a cultural sense. For example, children of Bangladeshi migrants in Canada via UAE may be citizens of Canada in a juridical sense, and yet their loyalties are divided between Bangladesh and the UAE. They are loyal to the former, which is their ancestral home, yet they are loyal to, and nostalgic about, Dubai or Abu Dhabi, where they grew up. Even a casual browsing of social networking groups or discussion groups on the Internet reveals interesting insights into the phenomenon of multiple belonging in the age of globalization. Second-generation migrant children are often caught in the bind of triangular belonging.

Citizenship status and social and cultural identity no longer correspond. Nor is there a need for such congruence. A twelve-year-old Bangladeshi boy in Abu Dhabi is addicted to popular Indian entertainment and likes to see himself as an Indian since he knows he cannot be an Emirati. He wants to distance himself from his Bangladeshi identity, which has a negative connotation, not so much because Bangladesh is a poor country but because Bangladesh is almost synonymous with menial workers in Abu Dhabi. However, this perception is not accurate, since many Bangladeshis are petty traders and service-sector employees, as well as doctors, engineers, and businessmen, some quite rich. Some Bangladeshis have made a successful transition from being low-paid members of the working class to hugely successful entrepreneurs. The boy’s sixteen-year-old sister, however, dislikes Hindi songs, and the only songs she knows and likes to sing along with are those of Beyonce, Avril Lavigne, and Nelly Furtado. Identity is increasingly becoming a matter of choice. If the nation can be imagined, as Ben Anderson taught us, it can also be unimagined.

The pressure to redefine one’s identity pushes some migrants toward a cosmopolitan identity. There is a new form of cosmopolitan life to which migrant workers are exposed in high-density urban areas in the Gulf region. In labor-receiving countries, Burmese and Filipino domestic workers often have university degrees. They take up jobs overseas mainly for economic reasons. This creates a mismatch between the academic and professional qualifications of migrant workers and the type of work available. Many

Bangladeshi workers and Filipino domestic workers in the UAE have college degrees. Their educational qualifications facilitate communication across ethnic and national groups, paving the way for the emergence of an incipient cosmopolitan life. Even among working-class migrants, one can find evidence of what may be called cosmopolitanism from below. Most Bangladeshi and Filipino domestic workers in our study were fluent in conversational Arabic, a language they learn out of necessity, which helps them communicate among themselves. Most Emirati households employ more than one domestic worker, and that, too, often from different countries. In the past few years, many Indonesian domestic workers have come to work in the UAE. One of the main reasons for employing Indonesian domestic workers is that they are Muslims (Al Hammadi 2008) they are perceived as clean and many of them pick up Arabic quickly.

*** Differentiation and Solidarity in the Bangladeshi Diaspora

Bangladesh became independent in December 1971 after a bloody war. Post-war Bangladesh faced economic difficulties with rising oil prices, since the country at that stage was completely dependent on imported oil. In the middle ofthe economic crisis, many Bangladeshis looked for an opportunity to leave their homeland, not in frustration and anger, but in the hope of making their country prosperous and helping their families. The logic that propelled the working class to come to the UAE, which in the popular imagination was “Dubai,” was its reputation as a land of gold, yet a place of hard work under the blazing sun. The reasons for migration for the middle-class migrant are not much different: supporting their families financially, educating their children, and securing their future.

In the international arena, there are some circumstances when migrants can find local support, especially among their own diaspora. For example, a Bangladeshi migrant in Dubai or Abu Dhabi can easily find fellow Bangladeshis who will offer initial support and hospitality. Not only are Bangladeshi migrants now able to meet fellow Bangladeshis in their destination country, but they are also able to shop in a Bangladeshi grocery shop, dine in a Bangladeshi restaurant, and watch Bengali TV programs thanks to satellite TV. Cheap telephone calls and the Internet enable

migrants to maintain close links with the folks back home or in other countries.

Sometimes the phrase diaspora is used selectively to refer to the migration of the middle classes who can articulate their nostalgia and yearning for a return to their homeland. Myron Weiner used the phrase labor diaspora to refer to those “who move across international borders to work in one country while remaining citizens in another” (Weiner 1986: 48). If a laborer or worker is defined as one who sells his or her labor power—or in the sense of classical political economic labor theory, as one who transforms the product of nature through the employment or input of labor power and in the process creates or adds value—several layers of differentiation disappear. In that sense, there is hardly any difference between a laborer who toils on the ground or one who works in the higher floors of the Burj Khalifa or an academic whose head is also in the clouds. The fundamental sociological difference lies in their differential status, pay packages, and privileges. The status difference is not unique, and often reproduces similar status differences carried over from the home country. Yet the migrants share a common diasporic status because, regardless of their class differences, they cannot gain citizenship in the host country.

Another issue of great significance is the sense of national belonging. Here we come head to head with traditional sociological concepts such as integration assimilation and rights to unionization. A migrant worker, regardless of his or her class position, is aware that at the end of the contract period, he or she has to return to the home country, or at least leave the country of work and move to another destination country. One of the favorite destinations of the professional class is Canada, a choice made possible by the high savings permitted by the Emirati pay packet combined with South Asian frugality.

Since assimilation and citizenship are no options, migrant professionals often move on to greener pastures. They also develop a sense of belonging—a handmaiden of nostalgia— for the place where they grew up. The slow pace of life, the high level of security, and the relative tolerance of the society make life fairly safe and comfortable for professionals in the UAE. For the working class, however, the experience is quite different. They are not

allowed to bring their families. Even if the regulatory rules were relaxed, their income would not be enough to cover the repatriation of their family members.

Even those who can afford to bring their families are reluctant to do so since keeping families back home ensures a higher rate of savings. The main reason why many people resort to temporary migration is to accumulate large savings. The high rate of savings enables the family to raise funds for the overseas education of children, to pay for a daughter’s wedding expenses, and to provide financial support to relatives back home. The multiplier effects of remittances—ranging from family support to education of children to assistance of relatives in migrating overseas — play a decisive role.

*** Migration, the National Question, and the Moral Economy

In the UAE, a popular discourse in the media, and also an important subject for policy makers, is how to ensure that the local national identity of the Emiratis is not threatened by the influx of migrants who outnumber them by four to one, and in certain places such as Dubai by nine to one. It is often claimed that all these foreigners bring their ways of life with them, which threaten to undermine local cultures and traditions. It is feared that foreigners are not always respectful of local traditions. For instance, a local newspaper runs a column in which an Emirati educates readers about the customs of Emirati society, describing how to initiate a conversation with a neighbor or a colleague, how not to cross gender barriers, and so on, offering useful, commonsensical advice.

However, migrant workers pose little threat to nation-building in the UAE. They often remain socially, and even physically, excluded. They live in communal settings in dormitory towns such as Musaffa. In this labor colony, tens of thousands of Bangladeshi workers cohabit with workers from other countries. The workers have their own social world, their hierarchy, and patron-client relationships. The classic moral economy of villagers and peasants described by E. P. Thompson and James Scott is useful in understanding the Bangladeshi community in Abu Dhabi’s Musaffa area,

where a web of non-contractual relationships binds employers and employees, forging and reinforcing a solidarity between the two classes. Although technically the patrons of the Bangladeshis (both workers and employers) are the Emiratis, that relationship is not captured by the notion of the moral economy. The kafala system is more of a financial transaction based on pure rationality and thus does not represent the moral economy.

At the birth celebration of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), Bangladeshi patrons organize feasts for workers of auto repair shops. The meal (meat, rice, and vegetables) is cooked for literally tens of thousands of people. When I attended one such celebration—with a modest menu but grandiose in scale—at least 3,000 people stood in queue for several hours and took turns to eat, squatting on the floor of a common area in the garage. The patrons, the auto repair shop owners, renew their obligation to their workers, just as the workers reaffirm their loyalty and deference to their employers. The workers were on their best behavior on the feast day, especially in the presence of their patrons.

Bangladeshi workers often remain confined to their district-based subcommunities and rarely cross the district line unless they find no people from their home district to befriend. Then they will go to the neighboring districts, and when people from their home districts are not available, they will reach out to fellow Bangladeshis from distant districts. Many Bangladeshis in Abu Dhabi hail from the port city of Chittagong, the second biggest city in Bangladesh. People from Chittagong began coming to the UAE in the mid-1970s after Bangladeshi contractors, engineers, and workers began playing an important role in the construction industry.

Links to the homeland are maintained through remittances, which cement both economic and social relationships. The informal channel for remitting money continues to play an important rble despite the presence of banks in Bangladesh. The networks that facilitate money transfers are often the same networks that enable the workers to come to the UAE in the first place.

According to a United Nations report, the three “Ds”—demography, development, and democracy—account for much of migration in

contemporary times. People tend to move out of overpopulated countries to less populated countries, from less developed to more developed countries, and from authoritarian to democratic countries. Less populated countries such as Canada and Australia remain popular destinations for migrants. In the Gulf region, the last D does not apply as yet. Indeed, in this case, the allure of higher income often attracts citizens of democratic countries to relocate to non-democracies. Recently, after a landslide electoral victory, Sheikh Hasina, the Bangladeshi prime minister, went to Saudi Arabia to perform umrah (pilgrimage) but she also made it a point to talk to Saudi leaders, pleading with them to offer more favorable terms to Bangladeshi workers so that they could change employers, thus easing labor mobility. Looking after the interests of workers is of great importance for leaders who depend on votes to win elections in the democracies of South Asia and Southeast Asia. The president of the Philippines once traveled to Kuwait for a day to attempt saving the life of a death-row prisoner, and was successful. The imperatives of democratic politics in which Bangladeshis in the UAE take a keen interest have important consequences both for government policies as well as for the protection of Bangladeshi workers' interests.

The life of migrant workers, broadly defined, is shaped by the global economy as much as by national politics and their social networks. They negotiate the interface between the global economy and national politics skillfully to maximize their interest. They draw upon the social connections in which they remain embedded. The nurturing of their social network is often aided by the new communication technology. Their agency is never thwarted by the social structures, however unfavorable, they confront. The social structures do change as well, sometimes, as internal dynamics change and in some instances with help from external prodding. These changes bring hopes to the world of the migrant workers. The migrant workers are sometimes frustrated, sometimes despondent, missing their parents or children but never without hope and courage.

[412] Gulf News, March 22, 23, and 26, 2006

[413] Dan McDougall, “Tourists become targets as Dubai’s workerstake revolt to the beaches,” Observer, April 9, 2006, p. 37.

[414] Gulf News, May 3, 2009.

[415] Brig. Al Mansouri, quoted in Gulf News, May 30, 2004.

[416] Business Times, August 15, 2006.

[417] Ministry of Labor, quoted in Gulf News, (various issues) 2005.

[418] National, April 3, 2010, p. 10.

[419] Observer [London], February 28, 2010.

[420] TIP Report, 2007, p. 24.

[421] TIP Report, 2007, p. 23.

[422] The National, May 20, 2009, p. 6.

[423] The National, May 20, 2009, p. 19.

[424] Manila People’s Forum on APEC declaration, 1996.

[425] Khaleej Times, May 10, 2009.

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** Negotiating Migrant Status in the Emerging Global City: Britons in Dubai

Katie Walsh

One significant impact on Dubai of its post-Federation economic diversification strategies and associated labor migration regime has been its emergence as an “immigrant gateway” (Price and Benson- Short 2007). Yet, we know very little about the ways in which the urban spaces of this emerging global city are experienced and negotiated by migrants. In the Dubai context, it is widely recognized that a strongly racialized and classed social hierarchy exists, with migrant groups positioned very differently in

relation to nationals and each other, depending on their country of origin (Kapiszewski 2001). In this paper, I examine a particular migrant group—relatively high-skilled white British migrants—as they encounter relatively low-skilled migrants from Asia and the Middle East in the city's urban spaces. In doing so, I explore how these encounters might be understood as being structured by postcolonial notions of race, class, and nationality, not least because they are reminiscent of British imperialism historically enacted elsewhere in Asia and the Middle East. I discuss the significance of these racialized encounters to focus attention on the ongoing traces of imperial power, and its instabilities, in the emerging global cities of the Gulf.

Dubai is one of 13 cities worldwide that, together, are the destination for one in every five international migrants (Price and Benson-Short 2008). It is this observation that leads Price and Benson-Short (2008) to put forward a claim for the necessity of re-thinking the criteria through which the connectedness of global cities is understood and, consequently, how cities are ranked as significant. Dubai is a city "seen as apart from the global city network," but arguably this reflects not its lack of "global-ness," but rather "an oversight or even a bias in how the rankings are constructed" (Price and Benson-Short 2008, p.108). Previously unacknowledged in global/world city literatures, this might be understood as part of a wider neglect of the Gulf in academic debates on globalization and transnationalism (see Al- Rasheed 2005). With the highest percentage of "foreign-born" population worldwide, at 83 percent of the total, Dubai emerges in their re-evaluation alongside two other Middle

Eastern cities, Jiddah and Riyadh, as an important “immigrant gateway,” where the “bottom up” transnationalism of its residents is enormously significant for our understanding of globalization and urban space. Indeed, Malecki and Ewers (2007, p. 473) argue that “the flows of people and the control of those flows rest at the core of the Gulf cities’ embodiment of globalization” and remind us that this migration includes workers at all skill levels. Life in the more widely acknowledged global cities, such as London, is understood to be characterized by the “super-diversity” of migrant identities (Vertovec 2007) and the resulting complexity of urban encounters is increasingly attracting the attention of scholars. In contrast, we know little about the negotiation of migrant status, race, and class, in the emerging global cities of the Gulf or Dubai specifically, yet commentators have suggested that “Dubai represents a grand experiment that we can expect to be replicated—with local variations—elsewhere over the coming decades” (Malecki and Ewers 2007, p. 475). So, as a corrective therefore, in this article I examine the everyday lives of one migrant group within this emerging global city: white British migrants in Dubai.

In 2006, the Institute of Public Policy Research in the United Kingdom estimated that 45,000 Britons lived in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) (Sriskandarajah and Drew 2006), but this is a hugely conservative figure. Indeed, it is widely suggested that Dubai alone had approximately 100,000 British residents in the latter part ofthe decade (Davis 2006). In my focus on this group, I do not make any claim to represent the full diversity of British migrant identities, practices, and interactions, merely those of a small group of participants from my fieldwork conducted in the mid-2000s when Dubai was undergoing rapid transformation. I am concerned here with their negotiation of their migrant status, within the wider “cultural politics” of Dubai—a term I adopt because it includes informal notions of power and refers to “the processes through which relations of power are asserted, accepted, contested, or subverted by means of ideas, values, symbols, and daily practices” (Glick Schiller 1997, p. 2). I will argue that everyday life in the emerging global city of Dubai is characterized by the racialization of urban space; furthermore, that the localized power relations of this particular city are, at least in part, the result of its global and transnational interconnections, both past and present. As a result, I will explore the social relations, practices, and identities of white British migrants as they inhabit this city, paying attention to the way in which their interactions demonstrate the continuities and instabilities of whiteness, particularly in relation to

“displaced” postcolonial encounters with migrants from Asia and the Middle East working in lower-skilled jobs.

It is now widely understood that “race” shapes the lives of those who are privileged by it, not just those whom it oppresses, and that mainstream spatiality is complicit with whiteness (Frankenberg 1993)[426]. In spite ofthe deconstruction of race as a social category, for a long time whiteness remained invisible, normative, unmarked, unnamed, and, by extension, a non-racial or racially neutral category, until critical theories of whiteness were explicated (for example, Bonnett 2000; Frankenberg 1993). Recently, the theorization of whiteness has been used to examine postcolonial European migration in various contexts—for example, Indonesia (Fechter 2005) and Hong Kong (Knowles 2005; Leonard 2008; Yeoh and Willis 2005)—and this body of literature can be usefully compared with white British migrant identities in the Gulf context. Such studies have focused, however, on the “colonial continuities” evident in the relations between nationals and expatriates, rather than considering the diverse range of relations between migrant groups that arise in the global city context (Fechter and Walsh 2010) and which I try to examine here, at least from the perspective of white British migrants.

I use the notion of “displaced” postcolonial encounters to evoke the transference of colonial continuities between contexts and to recognize that contemporary encounters between (trans)national groups are, to some extent, informed by (but not limited to) historical relations that were enacted elsewhere. In many respects, this is such a broad generalization that it is conceptually limited, but it is also necessary to draw attention to the way in which the character of these encounters resonates with the negotiation of difference in colonial contexts in the past, irrespective of whether the transnational groups involved have direct histories of imperial contact with each other, or at all, and even though it might not be perceived in this way by those involved (see also Yeoh and Willis 2005 who draw on Pratt’s notion of the colonial “contact zone” in discussing contemporary British migrants in Hong Kong). At the same time, and in (productive, I hope, rather than contradictory) tension with this suggestion, it is also important to develop a more closely nuanced and localized understanding of how spatialized

processes of racialization contribute to the negotiation of migrant identities in the global city, not least because race is geographically and historically contingent. So, I first map out some contextual background to the city, including a description of the contemporary migration flows and populations that help constitute the more specific dimension of these everyday encounters.

*** Migration Status and Diversity in the Dubai Context

Since the 1970s, like other Gulf countries, the UAE has increasingly sought migrant workers and maintained a strict migrant labor regime to sustain its economic growth (Massey et al. 2005). However, the most recent population census in 2005 suggests that, even within the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries, the UAE is unusual: Expatriates constitute approximately 70 percent of the total population and 90 percent of the labor force (Shah 2008). Within the UAE, Dubai is the most extreme case: 83 percent of its total population are “foreign-born,” the highest percentage worldwide (Price and Benson-Short 2007). Such patterns have led commentators to describe Dubai as “a place of and for mobility” (Junemo 2004, p. 184). It is, therefore, a distinctive and significant setting for researching migration in terms of the sheer number of migrants but, while less commented upon, the increasing diversity of (transnational) migrant residents is also significant.

In the segmented labor market of Dubai, as in other global cities, the recruitment and employment of migrant labor is strongly gendered and racialized, but the local Gulf context is also important. As Malecki and Ewers (2007, p. 477 emphasis added) note, “employers match jobs with certain segments of the workforce based largely on socially constructed attributes of skill, race, sex, or ethnicity,” but “the familiar topic of polarization in world cities, characterized by widening inequality, multi-ethnic cities with marked segregation by ethnic group, and social exclusion, takes on new forms in the Middle East.” In the first broad review of migrant labor in the Gulf, Kapiszewski (2001) described the way in which various migrant groups were differentiated by status in Dubai. His delineation explained that at the very top of the social hierarchy are Sheikhs and their families, followed by other Emirati Nationals of Arab or Persian origin. Wealthy Arab immigrants from Iraq, Palestine, and Egypt, some of

whom have been given Emirati national citizenship are identified as the migrant group with most social status; followed by other wealthy and professional migrant groups, including upper- and middle-class Indians, Lebanese, Iranians, and Europeans, including the British. Increasingly, we could add Russians and Chinese to this list. The lowest social position in the hierarchy described by Kapiszewski (2001) is inhabited by a large unskilled and low-skilled migrant population from South and Southeast Asia, predominantly India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Thailand, and the Philippines.

The resulting complexity of the social hierarchy makes it impossible to think through a black-white binary when considering the racialization of its urban spaces. The society is “kaleidoscopic” in Malecki and Ewers (2007) terms. Indeed, even to list these national groups in succession, obscures the complicated positional hierarchy that exists within these broad groupings that are described and explained in terms of “ethnicity,” “skill,” or “class.” While employment opportunities (and the associated wages, lifestyle, and s^fatus) in Dubai are linked to nationality, variations also exist within national groups, based on class. For instance, Vora’s (2008) research introduces us to the Indian middle-class migrants, employed in a wide range of occupations, whose level of education, English language proficiency, and socio-economic background grants them access to higher-wage jobs, as it does in other global cities, complicating the picture of the Asian-migrant-as-construction-worker reproduced in the global media. While Vora (2008) reports racial discrimination operating against these middle-class migrants and describes their experiences of status negotiation as non-citizens, their experiences are of course not comparable with those of many Indian nationals who work in the construction industry alongside other South Asians (see Human Rights Watch 2006) or are isolated behind closed doors in domestic work (Sabban 2004).

Not all British migrants in Dubai would be recognized in migration literatures on the highly skilled, globally mobile professionals, or transnational business class; yet, in spite of internal ethnic and class diversity, the British as a migrant “community” in Dubai retain a relatively privileged position in

Dubai’s social hierarchy described above, even within the category of white English-speaking or European migrants[427]. In part, this is a result of the long history of British presence in the region: The protectorate relation between the UAE and Britain from 1892 (see Heard-Bey 2004), led to Britons playing a significant role in the planning of Dubai and the establishment of key infrastructure such as the water system and port, particularly in the period directly prior to and immediately following the Federation of the UAE in 1971. The traces of this imperial relation are still in evidence in the visa system and have enabled a rapid increase of Britons in Dubai since 2000, but their occupations have diversified with the transformations of this city, to include those working in finance and accounting, law, marketing, project management and construction-related companies, logistics, technical support, media, retail, tourism, leisure, and hospitality. Furthermore, it is now equally common to find single British migrants (including women), alongside the more traditional “expatriate” family or married couple led by the male breadwinner.

Rarely in the media in the UK are links made between Britons and the problems associated with this segmented employment structure yet, like race or class more generally, these localized inequalities shape the lives of privileged migrants. For Davis (2005, p. 64), the position of the British in this social hierarchy is reminiscent of an Empire in a more generic sense:

“The Brits, led by David Beckham (who owns a beach) and Rod Stewart (who owns an island), are probably the biggest cheerleaders for al-Maktoum’s, paradise, and many of them luxuriate in a social world that recalls the lost splendour of gin-an-tonics at Raffles and white mischief in Simla’s bungalows.

Dubai is expert at catering to colonial nostalgia.”

Yet, he goes on to argue that “the city-state is also a miniature Raj in a more important and notorious aspect” and it is the complicitness and contribution of British migrants to the more widespread exploitation of low-paid Asian migrants that concerns him. Building on Davis, as well as arguments made in respect to the lives of globally mobile professionals in global cities more

generally (Fechter and Walsh 2010), it would seem important to pay attention not only to the relation between British migrants and Emirati nationals (see Coles and Walsh 2010), but also to the interactions of the British with other migrant workers in the emerging global city. However, rather than consider their relation with the Asian laborers who are “expected to be generally invisible” and whose existence between labor camp and construction site has been documented elsewhere (e.g., Davis 2005; Human Rights Watch 2006), here my focus is on interactions of Britons with migrants living and working in urban spaces alongside them, and with whom they will have contact on an everyday basis. The interactions I comment upon are with migrants from Asia and the Middle East who are working in lower-skilled positions (even if they are de-skilled by their migration); unfortunately, I do not have sufficient ethnographic material from the same time period to compare their interactions with wealthy and/or skilled professionals from Asia, Europe, and the Middle East who also inhabit these spaces[428]. In the next section, I discuss the domestic home space explicitly as one space of proximity, and then consider the features of these encounters more generally which would include malls, taxis, and places of leisure, such as restaurants, bars, and hotels.

This article draws on ethnographic research in Dubai, conducted in 2002–2004, a period when the city was undergoing rapid transformation accompanied with a sense of ongoing optimism prevalent before the more recent financial crisis. The analysis draws on material from interviews and participant observation, originating in a broader set of material examining domesticity, intimacy, and foreignness that I collected in relation to the British migrant community. The reflexive fieldwork approach was informed by feminist geography which has acknowledged the “messy” and intersubjective production of research (Katz 1993). As such, it is important to recognize my own position as it relates to the research topic. I am a white English female and I was 25 at the time of the research. My travel to tiubai was, in one sense, following in the footsteps of my father, who was born in India where his parents were working and, though educated in England, “returned” to Zimbabwe and South Africa in his twenties to work. My knowledge of his experience is minimal and living in Dubai to complete my PhD fieldwork was my first experience of living outside the UK (with the exception of a fivemonth backpacking trip a few years previously), yet in my embodied travel to this city there was something hauntingly familiar about both the climate and the sense of privilege I experienced. It was this

intimate, bodily sense of connection to the past and to colonial relations enacted elsewhere, that made me first think about the baggage white Britons carry with them more generally away from home.

However, this engagement was emphasized in my approach to Dubai as a city, through the influence of those writing about critical ethnography. At a more simplistic level, this might refer simply to the necessity of being attentive to the power evident in British migrant's relations with nationals and other migrant groups in this context (a concern evident in this article). However, drawing on Stuart Hall, Gillian Hart (2004) has suggested that critical ethnographies are distinguished by their attention to spatiality and articulation. In this vein, I attempt to disrupt the local/global dichotomy that dominates the approach of many traditional ethnographies and instead examine the multiple ways in which the local power relations of a particular place are, at least in part, the result of its global and transnational interconnections, both past and present. Third, another dimension of critical ethnographies is their aim to balance local specificity and theorizations of space and power more generally. Therefore, while analyzing the very particular geographies of race in which British migrant encounters are enacted, I engage with critical theories of race, racism, and whiteness that are more generally applied in other contexts.

*** British Migrant Encounters in the Racialized Spaces of the Emerging Global City

The previous section established the cultural "super-diversity" (Vertovec 2006) that exists in Dubai. As described above, migrants from Africa, the Middle East, and Asia, at least those who work in unskilled or low-skilled occupations, are positioned markedly lower than British migrants within Dubai's complex social and cultural hierarchy, from the perspective of both the Dubai nationals and the British themselves. While the strict migrant labor regime that operates in Dubai also impacts on the lives of the British, their migrant status awards them privilege in relation to most other migrant groups. But, how does this matter in everyday life? The everyday spaces of the global city are generally understood in terms of the stratification of migrant labor and their consequent segregation in neoliberal landscapes: Academic commentators on Dubai describe segregation as a key

characteristic of the emerging city (Marchal 2005; Elsheshtawy 2010; Masad 2008), while the image of Europeans living in their “expatriate bubble” in Dubai is also sustained in the popular imagination by the widespread association of the contemporary Middle Eastern city with residential compounds, gated communities, and privileged enclaves. Yet, this is misleading. Without exception, British migrants encounter other migrants of various nationalities in the urban spaces they inhabit, in spaces of work, consumption, and domesticity. Ethnographic “shadowing” of British migrants in such spaces demonstrates that their encounters with other migrants were often structured through prejudice, even if this was co-existent with tolerance—something which Valentine (2008) has argued is evident also in the UK itself, where discourses of “political correctness” come into play to structure people’s behaviors in public space. I certainly never witnessed v.olence or verbal harassment directed towards other people, but this prejudice instead took the form of unreflexive bodily gestures and dispositions of the kind that Parker (1999) describes (not discussed here) or verbal discussions with other British migrants of varying degrees of reflexivity. While these kind of everyday racisms are not harmful in the same way as physical violence or harassment, it can be argued that they nonetheless can injure a person directly in other ways and that they also contribute to the naturalization of global inequalities.

In particular, my field notes repeatedly demonstrate the significance of the domestic home space as a key site for the negotiation of migrant status in the emerging global city. This resonates with the findings of Yeoh and Huang (2010) in Singapore. In their analysis of the relation between women in this globalizing city, they argue that a politics of proximity is at play, so that encounters with migrant domestic workers in the privatized spaces of the home are a key source of anxiety for female Singaporean employers. Although often taken for granted conceptually in everyday urban life as a space of privacy and refuge, theorists have long suggested that the home is better understood as a semi-public space; while the presence of visitors can to some extent be controlled, what goes on inside the home is always informed by public discourse and practice (Blunt and Dowling 2005; Miller 2001). Furthermore, research on migrant domestic/care work in the global economy has suggested that the negotiation of cultural difference and social status becomes a significant and routine part of such intimate labor (Ehrenreich and Hochschild 2003). In the emerging global city of Dubai, the interactions of British migrants with their employees in the home resonate

with these wider patterns of the racialization of domestic workers. The construction of the Asian domestic worker as “unskilled,” “immature,” and “inexperienced”— while not as blatant as the colloquial “tea boy” and “house girl” sometimes used by nationals (Kanna 2010)—helps to justify low wages in return for long he urs, as well as condescending employer—employee relations. For example, this narrative extract from my field notes demonstrates how individual women from households where domestic workers are employed, draw on wider local discourses to naturalize a racialized labor migration regime:

Of course, the Sri Lankans are very efficient. Once you invest a bit of time in them they are very good. I liked my last maid and she was Sri Lankan so, even though this girt has no experience. I am tempted. Then I can tell her how I like things done anyway. It is nice to have someone who comes in and magically knows what needs doing and you get back and Da-Daa! I spoke to someone and she said the going rate for live-in was nine hundred Dirham a month [approximately £130] as she’s got no experience” (Field Notes, June 2003).

The quote is indicative of widespread discourses about how domestic workers must be trained to clean in the “right way,” as well as watched in case they are “pretending to busy as the car pulls in” (Field Notes 2002–10). It is evident in the discourses of both men and women British migrants, in households structured around the family as shown above, but also in shared houses of younger migrants, and in reference to both female and male domestic workers. For instance, in these field notes, Paul, who lived in a shared house of single, white, skilled migrants was complaining about the male Sri Lankan domestic worker they employed:

“How can he really get into it if he’s not wearing overalls? He’s so slow as weli; you know if I was cleaning this house I could do a much better job of it in half the time. I don’t think he uses the chemicals we buy. They just splash a bit of water around and think that’s clean” (Field Notes 2003).

The suggestion and assertion of surveillance and discipline here is associated with the disrespect of domestic workers’ human rights by those commenting

on GCC employment practices (Sabban 2004). Through the “management” of the domestic worker, the hegemony of a “postcolonial” white Britishness can be reaffirmed within the home, much as Knowles (2005) and Leonard (2008) describe in relation to wider practices of Britishness in Hong Kong. However, in contrast to the Hong Kong context where the negotiation described is between nationals and expatriates, British migrants in Dubai are involved in postcolonial relations with South Asian migrant workers. In this sense, it is as though the legacy of colonialism elsewhere impacts on the contemporary relations here in this emerging global city. The everyday encounters of many Britons with those positioned beneath them in Dubai’s social hierarchy, structured by migrant status, are informed by the sense of imperial capital that they carry with them.

Outside their homes too, British migrants come into contact with a range of other migrants, including workers, in various city spaces, especially spaces of consumption and leisure: restaurants, bars, clubs, malls, hotels, sports complexes, and beaches. However, rather than attempt to outline the complexities of these spaces and migrant encounters in turn (although this is an aim of my ongoing research), I wish to instead turn to two conceptual themes that arise from my field notes in relation to these spaces: First, the reflexive discourses surrounding the experience of being privileged in such global city encounters; and, second, the instability of whiteness in these racialized spaces which also becomes evident in many moments of encounter.

*** The Reflexive Framing of City Encounters

Although the privileged migrant status described above appears to be enacted in relatively unconscious ways, unsurprisingly the narratives of some British migrants suggest that changes in identity performances are actually negotiated reflexively as they negotiate their status as transnationals within the city. In this section, I examine some of the ways in which everyday racialized encounters ofthe emerging global city are framed and made sense of by British migrants.

The first thing I wish to acknowledge is that many British migrants that participated in my research did not appear to take their privilege for granted, at least when they talked about it with me as a researcher. In interview settings, Britons frequently recognized and articulated a sense of privilege in accordance with their position in Dubai's social hierarchy. For instance, Max, a journalist in his mid-twenties, argued:

"You just look around you, how this city is set up for you, and you think: '!'ve (expletive) made it!' I wonder what happens to expats when they go back. I wonder how on earth I'll feel going back, if I'll suddenly feel absolutely inadequate and sort of weird and suddenly stripped of a lot of status and prestige. I've found that to be someone a bit special, you need to be a foreigner" (Interview, July 2003).

From his account, it is clear that Max acknowledges the increase in social status afforded by his mobility and this particular urban hierarchy as being a temporary situation. Indeed, he speculates that on return to the UK his resultant downward class mobility will be experienced as distinctly unsettling.

Second, there is also evidence that some British migrants resist certain parts of the "expatriate lifestyle" Dubai offers or attempt to distance themselves from the "expatriate" identities (see also Yeoh and Willis 2005). For example, some female "trailing spouses" with a high household disposable income did not employ migrant domestic workers and explicitly framed this decision to clean their own homes as a resistance of "expatriate identity." Similarly, even though the income of lead migrants (nearly always male) was sufficient to bring couples and families to Dubai and sustain their lifestyle, some married Britons choose instead to be dual-income households. In this case, the "trailing spouse" (nearly always female) was determined to maintain their professional identity in opposition to the localized identity of "Jumeirah Jane" or "Jumeirah John" associated with European migrants who don't work. Other Britons choose not to participate in the more organized forms of European expatriate socializing and deliberately widen'their networks to include neighbors of all nationalities. While this is still relatively rare, Masad (2008) suggests that we might expect some of Dubai's more ethnically mixed neighborhoods to generate this form of interaction over time.

However, residential patterns are still strongly determined by wealth and evidence from the British context suggests that proximity does not necessarily lead to meaningful interaction (Valentine 2008).

I am also cautious to suggest that Dubai's urban spaces generate meaningful interactions because evidence of the resistance of racialized power frequently seems to go hand-in-hand with its reproduction. For instance, in these field notes, Claire explains that she has attempted to be on first-name terms with her domestic worker, while at the same time suggesting that subordination is culturally determined and fixed:

"I couldn't be doing with fish-fingers and children's dinners and all that. I have asked her to call me Claire, but to my face she calls me Madam. It's her culture. She thinks it should be that way, which is fine" (Field Notes, June 2003).

Similarly, the representation of the Asian migrant as desperate for any job or income at all, which many Britons use to justify low salaries, is joined by another frequent representation of "the" Asian migrant as remitting huge amounts of money to their home countries. For instance, many British migrants discussed their pleasure at being responsible for helping their domestic workers afford to pay for their children's education or build a house. Furthermore, as Maher (2002) argues, migration flows are often dismissed as entirely predictable geographies of labor, naturally produced by the "rational" consequences of inequalities of wealth between nations. Asian labor diasporas are represented as poor, needy, and unskilled, which serves to legitimate the inequalities of the labor relationship, including the neglect of human rights. For example, during one taxi journey I am accompanying a British man who gets angry with the driver, calls him an "idiot," and deducts money from the fare showing on the meter as a result of a wrong turn. While I was conducting my fieldwork, British migrants in Dubai used two main forms of transport to traverse urban space: private car or taxi. Unlike many Gulf cities, such as Manama or Muscat, taxi drivers in Dubai are always migrants rather than nationals, so the taxi is another key space of interaction in which British migrants negotiate their status. After the journey, I mentioned to Malcolm that I feel sympathy for the taxi drivers

because they are paid such low wages, but he was incredulous at my sympathy and argued:

“But it’s all relative! In their own countries they have nothing, so they’re much better off. Some of them are really happy...they’re happy with their lot” (Field Notes, July 2003).

Inequalities on a global scale are thereby routinely dismissed in this way. Furthermore, British migrants often further negate any sense of their own responsibility or participation in contributing to these inequalities, by drawing attention to their own position in the more locally specific social hierarchy that operates in Dubai. For instance, one British “trailing spouse” talking about her family employing a “maid,” explained:

“You have to get your mind around it. In your mind it still smacks of slavery, you feel embarrassed, but if you’re paying them well, it’s all you can do, because they don’t have conditions or rights’ (Field Notes, June 2.003).

In this way, even though such practices are recognized as negatively contributing to inequality, they are justified through claims that they are spatially specific and, therefore, temporary. The oft-cited British expression “when in Rome” is applied as a discursive strategy that obscures any sense of agency among British migrants in this context. Similarly, in an interview, Ed, a single recruitment consultant, suggested that a process of change was involved for the new British migrant, whereby during the first year of his residence in Dubai, he had become accepting of the privilege that his whiteness affords him in the city’s urban hierarchy as it might for white Americans and Europeans in other postcolonial settings (Fechter 2005; Leonard 2010):

“Things would actually turn my stomach when I first got here, but now I find I’m the first one to shout at the cabby when he doesn’t know where he’s going, but it is more huffing and puffing than being outright offensive” (Interview, July 2003).

In this way, British migrants seem to claim that it is everyday life in Dubai itself that generates racisms, with no acknowledgment of the connection of their behaviors with the wider patterns of the negotiation of race in postcolonial spaces. This might also be problematic on return to the UK: Rogaly and Taylor (2010) have demonstrated that the attitudes of expatriates towards “the Other,” are often carried back to the UK to inform their discourses about immigration and race “at home.”

Yet, it is certainly true that Britons do not form the highest tier of the social hierarchy in terms of status and associated privilege: Emirati nationals are a minority group within their own country, but they themselves are certainly not subordinated through the kinds of ongoing imperial relations that are in evidence in many other “postcolonial” urban contexts, such as Hong Kong. As British migrants are usually the employees of nationally owned companies and/or multinational firms, they can further distance themselves from the most extreme forms of exploitation associated with owners, investors, and governors; they too become merely migrant workers in the larger workings of the national and global economy. Related to this, one further strategy used by some British migrations is to highlight that internal class differentiation of Britishness itself, both at home and in diasporas. For example, in this extract, Malcolm (and he includes me in his observation) dissociates himself with a privileged sense of “expatriate Britishness” and suggests he cannot “buy into” a middle-class British lifestyle in Britain either, something which is most commonly discussed in terms of home ownership from which many British migrants feel excluded:

“I mean we’re not living the expat lifestyle that people at home would imagine. I wouldn’t say we’re carving out an existence, but we’re not affluent. We can’t afford to live in Britain and we’re chasing our tails” (Field Notes, July 2003).

In doing so, Malcolm draws a comparison with being “just a migrant” in Dubai. This is a narrative strategy that seems to resonate more strongly with the sense of non-belonging described by the middle-class Indian migrants in

Dubai (Vora 2008) than with a sense of privileged mobility we conventionally associate with white expatriates. In the next section, I explore this further.

*** The Instabilities of Whiteness

Clearly the sections of analysis above suggest that British migrants in Dubai experience a sense of privilege that we can understand as being linked to the meaning of whiteness and imperial legacies. Yet, the association of whiteness with a particular migrant status isn't fixed or absolute. Recent accounts have stressed the ambiguity, ambivalence, and multiplicity of white identities, as well as the need to contextualize the analysis of whiteness historically and geographically (Bonnett 2000; Frankenburg 1993) and historical research has complicated and deconstructed imperial binaries by examining agency and resistance on the colonial margins, and drawn attention to the potential instability of white colonial power (e.g. Duncan 2002). Similarly, discussing expatriate white identities in Jakarta and Hong Kong, respectively, Fechter (2005) and Leonard (2010) have suggested that contemporary negotiations of whiteness are also complex in their subjective experience of power. In Dubai, British migrants are very clearly positioned by the Emirati Nationals as part of a temporary labor force, although the impact of residency visas linked to property is yet to be understood. However, this differentiation is not simply between being local citizens or not: the British are also understood to be more foreign than some other groups of Arab immigrants who are understood to share cultural similarity. Furthermore, it is argued by some commentators that Dubai's citizens are becoming more focused on maintaining a distinctive national identity and long-term British migrants claim to have experienced this as an increasing sense of separation from their "hosts." Yet, more importantly, the instabilities in whiteness are mainly a result of the encounters of the British with those positioned below them in the social hierarchy in the routine everyday geographies of the city and it is this aspect that I would like to examine further here.

Arguably, many British migrants find the negotiation of some public spaces in Dubai difficult, as a result of informal processes of Othering. This is mainly linked to neighborhoods inhabited with large numbers of migrants from other countries. Elsheshtawy (2010) describes how certain areas within Dubai, in

particular Deira, Satwa, and Karama, are inhabited mainly by Asian migrants: large numbers of male, low-skilled bachelors from India, Sri Lanka, and Pakistan, as well as middle-class migrants from the aforementioned countries, the Philippines, and others. He is (rightly) celebrating the claims made over these “unspectacular” urban spaces by such migrants, in contrast to other parts of the city from which they are routinely excluded. In contrast, however, British and European migrants are only a smali percentage of the total city population and from their perspective the resultant impact on their own geographies of the city is in evidence. Many such migrants perceive the British (and other white Europeans) to be “foreign” and “different” too, not least because of the visibility of perceived phenotypic differences (such as skin color) or as a result of their dress, language, cultural practices, and wealth. This makes certain areas of the city uncomfortable for British migrants, especially women.

One example through which this can be explored is from my field notes of a visit to the beach, while shadowing two white British migrants in their midtwenties. This was not a typical event because, more often, Britons choose not to go to the public beaches, but instead belong to hotel beach clubs or use private swimming pools in their back gardens or compounds. Yet, at the same time, it is typical of the prejudices that result (in both directions) when they use public spaces alongside low-skilled migrants:

It’s a Friday, the weekend in Dubai, and as we drive through the main street of Satwa, a predominantly “Asian” residential and retail district, male migrants from Pakistan crowd the pavements, carrying prayer mats on their way to the mosque. Nick comments on these “swarms,” that they are “wearing their pyjamas” and while we are stopped at a crossing he says to me and Rachel: “Look at them, they’re so stupid, they’re like sheep…I can’t believe they spend their only day off at the mosque thinking it will change their (expletive) lives, rather than go to the beach or see their friends. They all wear the same thing, stupid dresses, there’s no individuality.” I look at Rachel, but her expression is indifferent and I suspect that this is not an unusual thing for Nick to say. Although his anger and prejudice disturb me, I keep quiet.

It’s very busy on the beach and we have to walk for a while to find a space for our towels. We lie down to sunbathe. A group of about thirteen male migrants from India in their early twenties are walking along the beach. Although they are still far away, several of them seem to be watching us. As they come closer, still staring, Nick snorts with laughter at their dress (they are wearing des and full-length black trousers with formal shirts tucked in). Some of them are walking in pairs, holding hands: “so gay,” Nick mutters, staring defiantly back. Rachel sighs and closes her eyes to ignore them saying: “they’re all perverts.” Their heads turn to continue watching us as they walk past. Eventually Nick gets angry and shouts: “No, you’re the strange one!”

Rachel goes into the water and a few minutes later we hear her shouting at two male migrants from Egypt. We stand up to see if she’s OK, but she’s coming out of the water quickly, complaining: “The wankers asked if I was Russian and wanted my phone number.” As Rachel is upset, we leave the beach in a hurry to go to the Lime Tree Cafe which is frequented exclusively by westernized expatriates as Nick says: to see some normal people.” Drinking cappuccinos on the terrace, it’s noticeably more relaxing. (Field Notes, Dubai 2002).

In interpreting the events occurring here in the context of much wider field notes, I would suggest that most of the time white British migrants seem to carry the privilege of their whiteness into urban encounters in Dubai. By this I mean that they unconsciously anticipate being able to inhabit public city spaces without being looked at, talked about, or questioned, in part because they are used to doing so at home, but also because they think of themselves as having a higher status than other migrant groups in Dubai. Drawing on theories of “whiteness” being constructed in the West as neutral and invisible, Byrne (2006) argues that white Britons feel unmarked by race when they negotiate everyday spaces. Away from home, where their racialized white identities mark white Britons as a minority group, informal processes of Othering become a painful disruption of their otherwise privileged status a^d, therefore, feel threatening. Nick and Rachel took their car to the beach because they considered it too hot to walk and so that Rachel could dress as she wished: in a short denim skirt and strappy top over her bikini. Although Nick also wore board shorts (surfer-style swimwear) with a t-shirt, this decision was clearly framed as being a result of Rachel’s body

requiring protection from the sexualized gaze of male Asian migrants. Nick worked as a project manager for a construction firm so he interacted with migrants from Asia on an everyday basis [describing them as ‘Jinglys’], yet beyond the workplace he feels discomfort with his power and status diminished.

Meanwhile, Rachel’s experience of being confused for being an East European sex worker, tells us something more about the instability of whiteness in the emerging global city. The unsettling experience of being wrongly identified resonates with the possibilities of misrecognizing nationality through assumptions about bodies, but it does not align with the conventional politics of misrecognition discussed in relation to global cities located elsewhere. Back (2006) suggests that following bombings in London in July 2005, the urban landscape was transformed and the fear of terrorism justified racism towards Asian and/or Muslim men (in particular), both from the police and more informally structuring encounters in London’s urban spaces. In Dubai, the “mistake” the men make in interpreting Rachel’s whiteness, also points to a more widespread difficulty in reading nationality from bodies but demonstrates the status ambiguity of white women’s identities in contemporary Dubai. For whiteness is not only interpreted in terms of the privileged migrant body of the Western European expatriate, but is also linked to Eastern European sex workers. The gendered, sexualized, classed, and racialized bodies of these migrant women are positioned very differently in the emerging global city, so that whiteness cannot be taken for granted by British women as a mark of a particular status. Clearly this has wider implications in terms of the cultural politics of globalizing Dubai, but from the perspective of British women it is generally considered an “inconvenience” or “frustration,” rather than being threatening in a more serious way. Nonetheless, Smith (2010, p. 273) reminds us that in a society where “bachelor” migration is so dominant, rather than ask women to dress more modestly “those in charge of Dubai have instead decided to work primarily on the behavior of men” with an anonymous telephone hotline being established for “women to call in case they are being stalked or harassed” receiving 8,000 calls in its first three years. But, again, the politics of this are complex, and there is a notable sense in which white British women expect to be treated in a particular way in this local context, even while they experience that their dress choices take on quite different meanings in global terms.

*** Conclusion

Over the last few years, the UAE has attempted to further diversify its migrant communities (Marchal 2005). One example of this might be the recruitment of English-speaking Kenyan women into customer service roles in the Metro or the male and female Starbucks employees of various African nationalities who now work as baristas. As the global city of Dubai emerges, therefore, it is clear that we need to be attentive to the implications of “displaced” postcolonial relations to understand how urban space is lived and negotiated by various migrant groups. In Dubai, belonging, identity, and status are contested across myriad lines of race, class, and gender, and the challenge for the UAE will be to develop and implement policies that actively move this society towards the space of “cosmopolitanism”[429].

The evidence in this article leads me to argue that migrant Britishness is produced, at least in part, through the negotiation of status in everyday interactions with a range of other migrants. Indeed, there is a sense in which contemporary performances of Britishness among these migrants are sometimes intimately connected to cultures of imperialism that were enacted elsewhere, although not in straightforward or clear-cut ways. In the context of the emerging global city, differentiations between self and other are somehow simultaneously based on both a rather vague perception of “foreignness” (due to the acknowledged difficulty in accurately reading national citizenship from bodies), as well as a quite precise (but frequently inaccurate) attempt to label difference through nationality and ethnicity. The racialization of these ethnic and national distinctions, are then made sense of and interpreted through Dubai’s status hierarchy.

What emerges from my analysis of some of these encounters, as well as British migrants’ understanding and framing of their negotiated status, are questions relating to the extent to which Dubai can be understood as a socially sustainable and “cosmopolitan” city. Masad (2008, p. 10) suggests that the gross simplification of Dubai as a “gated community” is unhelpful and that “as the city grows, its cosmopolitan nature expands and intensifies

reflected in such areas as dress, food, language, religion, and other aspects of lifestyle filtering through everyday life.” While he also acknowledges the current limits to Dubai’s claim to be cosmopolitan, most notably the constraints on the lives of laborers, Masad is optimistic about the potential for Dubai to become a “a truly modern city that cares for all of its residents and its future.” This optimism is based on the notion that increasing numbers of migrants are beginning to make their homes in Dubai and it is certainly difficult to refute the potential transformation that this could bring to people’s everyday conceptualizations of other residents and, ultimately, to their notions of equity and responsibility in this urban context. Yet, Gulf states regularly pass legislation reaffirming the difference in status between expatriates and nationals, and Al-Rasheed argues: “behind the facade of the latest technology, the ultra-modern shopping malls, the mushrooming internet cafes, and multinational fast-food chains, one encounters strong assertions of tradition rather than celebrations of hybridity and cosmopolitanism” (2005, p. 3). Likewise, Kanna places emphasis on “the persistence of national identity and boundaries, and their intersection with exploitation and class” (2010, p. 6). Disputing the notion of the world as a flat space for unfettered mobility, he suggests instead that the world is rendered “jagged” by the concrete ways in which the local and global interact. Although there is some evidence that many British migrants resist expatriate identities, they often simultaneously re-inscribe the privilege associated with whiteness in postcolonial spaces through their everyday encounters with other migrants. Therefore, in spite of this potential to become a new kind of very positively diverse city (which I too observe, especially in the geographies of young people), arguably Dubai might currently be better understood in terms of postcolonial spaces of encounter: postcolonial not with regards to ongoing imperial relations between Britons and Emirati nationals but, rather, in the relations between highly skilled European migrants and low-skilled migrants from Asia and the Middle East. In encounters between these groups, there is a sense of historical relations from elsewhere being reproduced in the urban spaces of this emerging global city, a kind of displaced postcolonial encounter.

[426] Beyond this instance, I do not use quote marks in this paper to distinguish the notion of “race.” I am still treating social categories—

including race, but also gender, class, nationality, ethnicity—as social constructions.

[427] It should be recognized that not all British nationals in Dubai are white British. There are many British nationals, born in Britain, with diasporic connections to other countries living in Dubai, as well as British passport holders who have never lived in Britain. However, while such ethnic diversity is important in considering Britishness, in this article I focus on white British migrants only.

[428] It is worth noting, however, that in the past the British community was probably more segregated from non-European migrants in terms of their leisure participation, partly because social activities were orientated around The Country Club which was spatially outside the city. However, even before the club was demolished, at the time of this research British migrants used a much more varied selection of consumption spaces alongside Emirati nationals and other wealthy/skilied migrants.

[429] I use “cosmopolitan” here in a loose way, but I recognize this is problematic considering the huge debates existing around the use of this concept.

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<quote>

“Buzzwords such as ‘fundamentalism’ and catchy phrases such as Samuel Huntington’s ‘West versus the rest’...obscure or even distort the immense spiritual and intellectual ferment that is taking place today among the world’s nearly 1 billion Muslims.”

</quote>

Like the printing press in sixteenth-century Europe, the combination of mass education and mass communications is transforming the Muslim-majority world, a broad geographical crescent stretching from North Africa through Central Asia, the Indian subcontinent, and the Indonesian archipelago. In unprecedented numbers, the faithful—whether in the vast cosmopolitan city of Istanbul, the suburbs of Paris, or in the remote oases of Oman’s mountainous interior— are examining and debating the fundamentals of Muslim belief and practice in ways that their less self-conscious predecessors in the faith would never have imagined.

Buzzwords such as “fundamentalism” and catchy phrases such as Samuel Huntington’s “West versus the rest” or Daniel Lerner’s “Mecca or mechanization” are of little use in understanding this transformation.[1] Indeed, they obscure or even distort the immense spiritual and intellectual ferment that is taking place today among the world’s nearly 1 billion Muslims, reducing it to a fanatical rejection of everything modern, liberal, or progressive. To be sure, such fanaticism plays a part in what is happening—dramatically and violently—but it is not the entire story.

A far more important element is the unprecedented access that ordinary people now have to sources of information and knowledge about religion and other aspects of their society. Quite simply, in country after country, government officials, traditional religious scholars, and officially sanctioned preachers are finding it hard to monopolize the tools of literate culture.

*** Intellectual Monopolies Broken

No longer can governments control what their people know and what they think. The intellectual monopolies of the past have been irrevocably broken. What distinguishes the present from previous eras is the large numbers of believers engaged in the “reconstruction” of religion, community, and society. In the past, one thought of profound changes in ideas and doctrines primarily in terms of “topdown” approaches and formal ideologies. Political or religious leaders would prescribe, and others were to follow. In the late twentieth century, the major impetus for change in religious and political values is coming from “below.” It is not just changes in explicit ideologies that matter, but also the implicit background understandings against which beliefs and practices are formulated.[2]

Thus, in one of the first major syntheses on the changing nature of the Muslim experience in Europe, scholar Gilles Kepel’s 1987 book Les banlieues de l’Islam: naissance d’une religion en France (Islam’s Suburbs: The Birth of a Religion in France) presaged the shift from being Muslim in France to being French Muslim. In Turkey, this means that an increasing number of Turks, especially those of the younger generation, see themselves as European and Muslim at the same time, as do politicians in the Netherlands such as Oussama Cherribi, a Moroccan-born member of parliament. And some Iranians, such as political scientist Fariba Adelkhah, argue that the major transformations of the Iranian revolution occurred not in 1978–1979, but with the coming of age of a new generation of Iranians who were not even born at that time. These transformations include a greater sense of autonomy for both women and men and the emergence of a public sphere in which politics and religion are subtly intertwined, and not always as anticipated by Iran’s formal religious leaders.[3]

*** Islam in the “Modern” Era

If modernity is defined as the emergence of new kinds of public space, including those not imagined by preceding generations, then developments in France, Turkey, Iran, and elsewhere suggest that we are living through a period of profound social transformation for the Muslim-majority world.

Distinctive to the modern era is that discourse and debate about Muslim tradition involve people on a mass scale. They also necessarily involve an awareness of other Muslim and non-Muslim traditions. Mass education and mass communication in the modern world facilitate an awareness of the new and unconventional. In changing the style and scale of possible discourse, these tools reconfigure the nature of religious thought and action, create new forms of public space, and encourage debate over meaning.

Mass education and mass communications are important in all contemporary world religions. However, the full effects of mass education, especially higher education, have only begun to be felt in much of the Muslim world since mid-century and in many countries considerably later. Morocco, for example, committed itself to universal schooling after gaining independence from France in 1956. Though in 1957 only 13,000 secondary school degrees were awarded, and university enrollments remained low, by 1965 more than 200,000 students were in secondary schools, and some 20,000 in universities. By 1992, secondary school enrollment topped 1.5 million, and university students numbered 240,000. While illiteracy rates in the general populace remain high—43 percent for men and 69 percent for women—a critical mass of educated people are now able to read and think for themselves.

The situation in Oman is more dramatic because the transformation has taken place in a much shorter period. In 1975–1976, a mere 22 students graduated from secondary school. Little more than a decade later, in 1987–1988, 13,500 students were enrolled in secondary education institutions. In 1996–1997, 76,500 were enrolled, and more than 7,000 students were in postsecondary institutions, including the national university, which had opened in 1986.

Elsewhere a similar picture emerges, although the starting dates and levels of achievement differ. In Turkey, mass education has reached every city, town, and village. Adult illiteracy rates as of 1995 were 8 percent for males and 28 percent for females, down from 65 percent and 85 percent, respectively, four decades earlier. Secondary schools are now ubiquitous, and both private and public universities have proliferated. In Indonesia,

university enrollment, only 50,000 in 1960, reached 1.9 million in 1990. Iran also has seen a significant expansion in education opportunities at all levels.

Although in Egypt, Morocco, and many other Muslim-majority nations population growth has outpaced educational expansion, the number of people able to question religious and political authorities, and not just listen to them, has increased dramatically. Women's access to education still lags behind that of men, although the gap is rapidly closing in many countries, including Turkey, Kuwait, and Malaysia.

*** Multimedia

Both mass education and mass communications—especially the proliferation of media and the means by which people communicate—have had a profound effect on how people think about religion and politics throughout the Muslim world. Multiple means of communication make the unilateral control of information and opinion much more difficult and foster, albeit inadvertently, a civil society of dissent. We are still in the early stages of understanding how different media—including print, satellite and broadcast television, radio, and audiocassettes—influence groups and individuals, encouraging unity in some contexts and fragmentation in others, but a few salient features may be sketched.[4]

At the "high" end of this transformation is the rise to significance of books such as al-Kitab wa-lQur'an (The Book and the Koran), published in 1992 and written by the Syrian civil engineer Muhammad Shahrur. Although its circulation has been banned or discouraged in many places, it has sold tens of thousands of copies throughout the Arab world. The success of Shahrur's first book— regarded by legal scholar Wael Hallaq as the "most convincing" of attempts to reformulate Islamic legal theory—could not have been imagined before large numbers of people were able to read and understand its advocacy of reinterpreting ideas of religious authority and tradition and applying Islamic precepts to contemporary society.

Shahrur draws an analogy between the Copernican revolution and Koranic interpretation, which he says has been shackled for “too long” by the conventions of medieval jurists: “People believed for a long time that the sun revolved around the earth, but they were unable to explain some phenomena derived from this assumption until one person, human like themselves, said, ‘The opposite is true: The earth revolves around the sun.’... After a quarter of a century of study and reflection, it dawned on me that we Muslims are shackled by prejudices [musallimat], some of which are completely opposite the [correct perspective].”[5]

On issues ranging from the role of women in society to rekindling a “creative interaction” with non-Muslim philosophies, Shahrur argues that Muslims should reinterpret sacred texts and apply them to contemporary social and moral issues: “If Islam is sound [salih] for all times and places,” Shahrur writes, Muslims should not neglect historical developments, but must act as if “the Prophet just ... informed us of this Book.”

Shahrur is not alone in attacking both conventional religious wisdom and the intolerant certainties of religious radicals and in arguing instead for a constant and open reinterpretation of how sacred texts apply to social and political life. Another Syrian thinker, the secularist Sadiq Jalal al-Azm, for instance, does the same. A debate between al-Azm and Qatari Shaikh Yusif al-Qaradawi, a conservative religious intellectual, was broadcast on Qatar’s alJazeera satellite television on May 27, 1997 on the program “The Opposite Direction.” For the first time in the memory of many viewers, the religious conservative came across as the weaker, more defensive voice.

Al-Jazeera is a new phenomenon in Arab-language broadcasting because its talk shows, such as “The Opposite Direction,” feature live discussions on such sensitive issues as women’s role in society, polygamy, Palestinian refugees, sanctions on Iraq, and democracy and human rights in the Arab world. Similar discussions are unlikely to be rebroadcast on state-controlled television in most Arab nations, where programming on religious and political themes is generally cautious. Nevertheless, satellite technology and videotape render traditional censorship ineffective.

*** Ideas Crossing Borders

Tapes of these satellite television broadcasts circulate from hand to hand in Morocco, Oman, Syria, Jordan, Egypt, and elsewhere. Al-Jazeera shows that people across the Arab world, like their counterparts elsewhere in the Muslim-majority world, want open discussion of the issues that affect their lives, and that new communications technologies make it impossible for governments and established religious authorities to stop them.

Other voices also advocate reform. Fethullah Gülen, Turkey's version of media-savvy American evangelist Billy Graham, appeals to a mass audience. In televised chat shows, interviews, and occasional sermons, Gülen speaks about Islam and science, democracy, modernity, religious and ideological tolerance, the importance of education, and current events. Gülen has his finger on the pulse of a wide spectrum of religious-minded Turks.[6] And religious movements such as Turkey's Risale-i Nur, or the Nurcus, appeal increasingly to religious moderates. In stressing the links between Islam, reason, science, and modernity, and the lack of inherent clash between "East" and "West," these movements promote education at all levels and appeal to a growing number of educated Turks.[7]

Iran's Abdolkarim Soroush argues that a proper understanding of Islam requires dialogue, a willingness to understand the opinions of others, adaptation, and civility. Indonesian and Malaysian moderates make similar arguments. To the annoyance of more conservative clerics, Soroush has captured the religious imagination of Persian speakers in Iran and abroad, and his work, in translation and on the Internet in several languages including Turkish, Arabic, and English, has a reach far beyond Iran.[8] In Pakistan, a 1997 book making an argument parallel to Shahrur's, Qur'anic and NonQur'anic Islam, by Nazir Ahmad, a retired military officer, quickly went into a second printing.

Not all religious books are aimed at the intellectual elite. Mass schooling has created a wide audience of people who read but are not literary sophisticates, and there has been an explosive growth in what French scholar Yves Gonzalez-Quijano calls generic "Islamic books": inexpensive,

attractively printed texts intended for such readers. Many address practical questions of Muslim life in the modern world and the perils of neglecting Islamic obligations—and

not all appeal to reason and moderation. Many of these books have bold, eyecatching covers and sensational titles such as The Terrors of the Grave, or What Follows Death, by Egyptian writer Ahmad al-Tahtawi, which informs readers of what awaits them if they do not prepare properly for Judgment Day. Other, more subdued works offer advice to young women on how to live as Muslims today. Often based on the sermons of popular preachers, Islamic books are written in a breezy colloquial style instead of with the cadences of traditional literary Arabic, and are sold on sidewalks and outside mosques rather than in bookstores. While Egyptian Nobel Laureate Naguib Mahfouz is considered successful if he sells 5,000 copies of one of his novels in a year in his own country, Islamic books often have sales numbering in six figures.

[[d-f-dale-f-eickelman-the-coming-transformation-in-1.png][**Opposite Directions** Egyptian religious conservative Safinez Kadhim (standing, right), accuses Toujan Faisal (left), the first woman member of Jordan’s parliament, of blasphemy during a live broadcast of “The Opposite Direction” on al-Jazeera satellite television in 1997. When the moderator, Faisal al-Qasim (center), reminded Kadhim that she was on live television, she replied, “I don’t care if we’re on Mars. I’m going back to Cairo,” and stormed out of the studio.]]

*** A Marketplace of Views

As a result of direct and broad access to the printed, broadcast, and taped word, more and more Muslims are individually interpreting the textual sources—classical or modern—of Islam. Much has been made of the “opening up” (infitah) of the economies of many

Muslim countries, allowing market forces to reshape economies, regardless of the painful short-term consequences. In a similar fashion, intellectual market forces support some forms of religious innovation and activity over others. In Bangladesh, women’s romance novels, once a popular specialty distributed in secular bookstores, now have Islamic counterparts that are

distributed through Islamic bookstores, making it difficult to distinguish between “Muslim” romance novels and “secular” ones. The result is a collapse of earlier, hierarchical notions of religious authority based on claims to the mastery of fixed bodies of religious texts. Even where there are state-appointed religious authorities—as in Oman, Saudi Arabia, Iran, and Egypt—no longer is there any guarantee that their word will be heeded, or even that they themselves will follow the lead of the regime.

Religious activists in Egypt, the West Bank, and elsewhere are more likely to be the products of mass higher education than of such traditional educational institutions as the madrasa, or mosque-school. The result of the “massification” of education, especially higher education, and the proliferation of means of communication is to challenge and collapse centralized and hierarchical claims to authority. No one group or type of leader in contemporary Muslim societies possesses a monopoly on the management of the sacred. Without fanfare, the idea of Islam as dialogue and civil debate is gaining ground. This new sense of public space is emerging throughout Muslim-majority states and Muslim communities elsewhere. It is shaped by increasingly open contests over the use of the symbolic language of Islam.

*** Discourse Becomes Global

Increasingly, discussions in newspapers, on the Internet, on smuggled cassettes, and on television cross-cut and overlap, contributing to a common public space. New and accessible modes of communication have made these contests increasingly global, so that even local issues take on transnational dimensions.

The combination of new media and new contributors to religious and political debates fosters an awareness on the part of all actors of the diverse ways in which Islam and Islamic values can be created. This mixture feeds into new senses of a public space that is discursive, performative, and participative, and not confined to formal institutions recognized by state authorities.

Finally, two cautions are in order. The first is that an expanding public sphere need not necessarily indicate more favorable prospects for democracy. Authoritarian regimes are compatible with an expanding public sphere, although the latter offers wider avenues for awareness of competing and alternate forms of religious and political authority. Nor does civil society necessarily entail democracy, although it is a precondition for democracy.

Still, publicly shared ideas of community, identity, and leadership take new shapes in such engagements, even as many communities and authorities claim an unchanged continuity with the past. Mass education, so important in the development of nationalism in an earlier era, and a proliferation of media and means of communication have multiplied the possibilities for creating communities and networks among them, dissolving previous barriers of space and distance, and opening new grounds for interaction and mutual recognition.

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[1] See Daniel Lerner, The Passing of Traditional Society: Modernizing the Middle East (New York: Free Press, 1964), p. 405; Samuel Huntington, “The Clash of Civilizations?” Foreign Affairs, Summer 1993.

[2] See Charles Taylor, “Modernity and the Rise of the Public Sphere,” in the Tanner Lectures on Human Values, vol. 14 (1993), pp. 217–219.

[3] Fariba Adelkhah, Being Modern in Iran (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000).

[4] See Dale F. Eickelman and Jon W. Anderson, eds., New Media in the Muslim World: The Emerging Public Sphere (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1999).

[5] Translations from The Book and The Koran are by Dale F. Eickelman.

[6] See Bülent Aras, “Turkish Islam’s Moderate Face,” Middle East Quarterly, September 1998.

[7] The group’s website, in both English and Turkish, can be found at www.nesil.com.tr.

[8] See Valla Vakili, Debating Religion and Politics in Iran: The Political Thought of Abdolkarim Soroush (New York: Council on Foreign Relations, 1996).

#title Inside the Islamic Reformation

#subtitle For the Muslim world’s one billion people, this may be a time of change as profound as the Protestant Reformation was for Christendom. Our author reports on the currents and counter-currents that are pulling the faithful in new directions.

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Al-Hamra, a provincial capital in the northern Oman interior, was remote even by that country's standards when I first visited it in June 1978. Paved roads and electricity had not yet reached the oasis; only a few homes had generator-powered televisions, and the nearest telephone was almost an hour's drive away. It was much the same when I returned to the oasis a year later to conduct field research. On this second visit, I spent a day in formal discussions with local officials and tribal leaders, and then, having missed my bus, was obliged to spend the night. The shaykh (or tribal leader) of the 'Abriyin graciously invited me to stay in his guest house along with several men who were visiting from outlying villages.

Well before dawn, these other guests--observant Muslims to a man--rose for morning prayer, and one of them called to me to ask whether I intended to perform my ablutions. 'Not yet,' I replied, and went back to sleep. Some minutes later, my host, Shaykh 'Abdallah al-'Abri, gently prodded me with the muzzle of a machine pistol. In Oman, it is bad manners to touch a sleeping person with one's hands, and Shaykh 'Abdallah was a model of politeness.

'Are you sick?' he asked. 'You're not getting ready to pray.'

Half asleep, I mumbled, 'I'm Christian; we pray differently.'

Shaykh 'Abdullah looked momentarily puzzled, then went away.

His puzzlement was no mystery. The shaykh had naturally assumed that a speaker of Arabic with a reasonable command of Omani etiquette would also

rise to pray. In the late 1970s, he and the other inhabitants of the oasis had no pressing cause to think about any faith beyond Islam. Such terms as Muslim and Christian scarcely entered their minds. The British army officers and oil company officials regularly passed through the region rarely stayed for long and, in any case, gave the inhabitants of al-Hamra little reason to think about other religions. The South Asian construction workers at the oasis were mostly Muslim, as were the schoolteachers from other Arab countries.

Yet al-Hamra (pop. 2,600), a compact town of mud-brick buildings on a rocky slope next to an underground irrigational canal (falaj), was changing--just how profoundly, I did not then grasp. A decade earlier, the oasis's habitable limits, still defined by the watch towers used to guard against rival tribes, had begun to push outward, as new diesel-driven pumps brought water from privately owned wells to new agricultural lands far away from the head of the town's falaj (where, the water being purest, the tribal aristocracy lived). By the late '70s, schools and government offices were being built beyond the marketplace, once the far end of the town. By then, too, nearly all school-age children in al-Hamra attended elementary school, and government jobs and wage labor had supplemented date palms as the inhabitants' foremost source of income. The Beau Geste profile of al-Hamra was fast being altered, and I had come--and would return again and again over the ensuing years--to study the transformation.

A few weeks after my overnight stay, I returned with my wife and daughter to spend a year in al-Hamra. Adjusting to a rhythm of life marked by the five daily prayers and, for men, the weekly congregational prayer, we soon learned to distinguish the voices of neighbors calling the faithful to mosques throughout the oasis. Islamic rituals were so thoroughly woven into the daily life of the community that everyone took them for granted.

That was why, on a return visit nearly a decade later, I was startled when a young relative of the tribal leader--a high school student when I'd first met him in 1979 but now a university-trained police officer--announced to me that the people of al-Hamra, his own relatives included, were 'ignorant' of Islam and therefore acted 'like animals'that is, unthinkingly. 'Sure,' he said, 'they pray and fast, but they can't explain why. Muslims must explain their beliefs.'

His words came back to me last April, when I gave a public talk in Istanbul. I had been invited by an organization connected with the Refah (Welfare) Party, which has run Istanbul since 1994. Although the Refah party is routinely described as ‘fundamentalist,’ the Turkish panelists who commented on my talk were anything but provincials cut off from the outside world. They invoked such figures as the German philosopher Jürgen Habermas and the French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu, and were at ease in English and other foreign languages. These, and other religiously minded young Turks I met, were not the ‘fundamentalists’ of stereotype. The reality they represented--like that of the young Omani policeman--was far more complex.

Years hence, if my suspicion is correct, we will look back on the latter half of the 20th century as a time of change as profound for the Muslim world as the Protestant Reformation was for Christiandom. Like the printing press in the 16th century, the combination of mass education and mass communications is transforming this world, a broad geographical crescent stretching from North Africa through Central Asia, the Indian subcontinent, and the Indonesian archipelago. In unprecedentedly large numbers, the faithful--whether in the vast cosmopolitan city of Istanbul or in Oman’s tiny, remote al-Hamra oasis--are examining and debating the fundamentals of Muslim belief and practice in ways that their less self-conscious predecessors in the faith would never have imagined. This highly deliberate examination of the faith is what constitutes the Islamic Reformation.

Unfortunately, buzzwords such as ‘fundamentalism,’ and catchy phrases such as Samuel Huntington’s rhyming ‘West versus Rest’ and Daniel Lerner’s alliterative ‘Mecca or mechanization,’ are of little use in understanding this reformation. Indeed, they obscure or even distort the immense spiritual and intellectual ferment that is taking place today among the world’s nearly one billion Muslims, reducing it in most cases to a fanatical rejection of everything modern, liberal, or progressive. To be sure, such fanaticism plays a part in what is happening--dramatically and violently--but it is far from the whole story.

A far more important element of the Islamic Reformation is the unprecedented access that ordinary people now have to sources of information and knowledge about religion and other aspects of their society. Quite simply, in country after country, government officials, traditional religious scholars, and officially sanctioned preachers are finding it very hard to monopolize the tools of literate culture. For example, when I first ventured into the field as an anthropologist in 1968, I routinely saw people in southern Iraq gather around literate members of the community, including shopkeepers, to have the newspapers read aloud to them; that same year, in rural Morocco, I was not infrequently asked to translate the formal Arabic of radio newscasts into colloquial Moroccan. By the mid-1970s, however, the need for such translation had dramatically decreased. And in 1992, during the Moroccan parliamentary election campaigns, I observed that young people, even in remote villages, were unafraid to ask the candidates probing questions, because they could now speak the public language of the educated. I also saw a makhazni, a low-ranking rural auxiliary policeman, politely but firmly refuse a questionable command from a local Ministry of the Interior official, pointing to written instructions he had received from provincial headquarters. Just decade earlier, the same policeman would have been illiterate and therefore unable to challenge such an order.

In al-Hamra, when I first came to know it, people received ‘news’ from Shaykh ‘Abdallah. In 1980, when he started his generator to run the electric fans in his guest house, everyone in town knew that visitors with ‘news’ had arrived and that soon the shaykh would be relaying it to them (or at least as much of it as he cared to tell). Two years later, when I was again in Oman, families in al-Hamra saw the same TV images of the massacres in Beirut’s Sabra and Shatila refugee camps that viewers in America did--thanks to a CBS news feed to Oman state television. Today, with paved roads, telephones, electricity, fax machines, and satellite television, al-Hamra is a changed place. ‘News’ is no longer a monopoly of the few, and TV images bring people and places previously at the margin of awareness into the foreground. Among other consequences, this is helping to alter the way large numbers of Muslims, in al-Hamra and elsewhere, think about themselves, their religion, and their politics.

Mass education, the other major catalyst of change, has also gained momentum. In much of the Muslim world, it began to be introduced only after the 1950s, and in many countries considerably later. Morocco, for instance, commited itself to universal schooling after gaining independence from France in 1956. Though in 1957 only 13,000 secondary school degrees were awarded, and university enrollments remained low, by 1965 there were more than 200,000 students in secondary schools, and some 20,000 in universities. By 1992, secondary school enrollment topped 1.5 million, and university students numbered 240,000. While illiteracy rates in the general populace remain high--38 percent for men and 62 percent for women--there is now a critical mass of educated people who are able to read and think for themselves without relying on state and religious authorities.

The situation in Oman is more dramatic because the transformation has taken place in a much shorter period. In 1975–76, a mere 22 students graduated from secondary school. Little more than a decade later, in 1987–88, 13,500 did. In 1995, 60,000 graduated; more than 3,500 students in post-secondary institutions, including the national university, which had opened in 1986.

Elsewhere the story is much the same, though the starting dates and levels of achievement differ. In Turkey, Indonesia, and Malaysia, mass education has reached every city, town, and village. In Turkey, for instance, adult illiteracy rates as of 1990 were 10 percent for males and 30 percent for females, down from 65 percent and 85 percent, respectively, four decades earlier. Secondary schools are now ubiquitous, and both private and public universities have proliferated. In Indonesia, university enrollment, only 50,000 in 1960, reached 1.9 million in 1990. Iran also has seen a significant expansion in education opportunities at all levels. In Egypt (as, for that matter, in Morocco), population growth has outpaced educational expansion; yet even so, the number of people able to convense intelligently with religious and political authorities, and not just listen to them, has increased dramatically.

So has the market for books, including books about religion and society. One text that has figured centrally in the Islamic Reformation is the ground-breaking The Book and the Qur’an: A Contemporary Interpretation (1990),

written by Muhammad Shahrur. a Syrian civil engineer. To date, it has sold tens of thousands of copies. Even though circulation of the 800-page book has been banned or discouraged in many Arab countries, photocopy machines and pirate editions (in Egypt, among other places) have allowed it to travel across official borders.

Shahrur, who was educated in Damascus, Moscow, and Dublin, draws an analogy between the Copernican revolution and Qur'anic interpretation, which for too long, he says, has been shackled by the conventions of mediaeval jurists: 'People believed for a long time that the sun revolved around the moon, but they were unable to explain some phenomena derived from this assumption until one person, human like themselves, said, 'The opposite is true: The earth revolves around the sun.'... After a quarter of a century of study and reflection, it dawned on me that we Muslims are shackled by prejudices, some of which are completely opposite the correct perspective.'

On issues ranging from the role of women in society to the need for a 'creative interaction' with non-Muslim philosophies, Shahrur argues that Muslims should reinterpret sacred texts and apply them to contemporary social and moral issues. Islamic inheritance law, for instance, which provides women a smaller share of any legacy than men, may have been an advance for women in an earlier era, but, he contends, it is discriminatory in modern society. 'If Islam is sound for all times and places,' Shahrur says, Muslims must not neglect historical developments and the interaction of different generations. Muslims must act as if 'the Prophet just ... informed us of this Book.'

Shahrur's book may one day be seen as a Muslim equivalent of the 95 Theses that Martin Luther nailed to the door of the Wittenberg Castle church in 1517. It took years before Luther's ideas took hold, but eventually even steadfast opponents had to take them into account and modify their ways of thinking and acting. The same may happen with Shahrur's ideas, though even more rapidly. Already, his views have been assailed in 14 books (some longer than his own) and countless magazine articles and sermons.

Shahrur is not alone in attacking conventional religious wisdom and the intolerant certitudes of religious radicals, or in calling for an ongoing interpretation of the application of sacred texts to social and political life. Another Syrian thinker, the secularist Sadiq Jalal al-‘Azm, for instance, does the same. In May 1997, a debate between al-‘Azm and Shaykh Yusif al-Qaradawi, a conservative religious intellectual, was broadcast on al-Jazira Satellite TV (Qatar), and for the first time in the memory of many viewers, the religious conservative came across as the weaker, more defensive voice. That program is unlikely to be rebroadcast on state-controlled television in most Arab nations, where programming on religious and political themes is generally cautious. Nevertheless, satellite technology and videotape render traditional censorship ineffective. Tapes of the broadcast are circulating from hand to hand in Morocco, Oman, Syria, Egypt, and elsewhere.

Other voices also advocate reform. Turkey’s Ali Bulaç, a university-based theologian, has captured the imagination of the educated young with his call for authenticity and a reinterpretation of the first years of the Prophet’s rule, applying Muhammad’s precepts and practices to current controversies about pluralism and civil society. Fethullah Gülen, Turkey’s answer to media-savvy American evangelist Billy Graham, appeals to a mass audience. In televised chat shows, interviews, and occasional sermons, Gülen speaks about Islam and science, democracy, modernity, religious and ideological tolerance, the importance of education, and current events. Because he regards Turkish nationalism as compatible with Islam, Gülen is said to have the ear of Turkey’s senior military officers.

For a pan-Arab audience, Morocco’s Sa‘id Binsa‘id argues that a proper understanding of Islam enjoins dialogue, a willingness to understand the opinions of others, adaptation, and a disposition toward good relations within a framework of civility. Indonesian and Malaysian moderates make similar arguments. So does Iran’s Abdokarim Soroush, who, to the annoyance of more conservative clerics and the government, has captured the religious imagination of Persian readers. His work, in translation, also reaches Turks and others in the Muslim world. In Pakistan, a recent book making an argument similar to Shahrur’s, Qur’anic and Non-Qur’anic Islam (1997), by Nazir Ahmad, a retired military officer, quickly went into a second printing.

The books of the Islamic Reformation are not all aimed at highbrows. Mass schooling has created a wide audience of people who read but are not literary sophisticates, and there has been an explosive growth in what a French colleague of mine, Yves Gonzalez-Quijano, calls generic ‘Islamic books’--inexpensive, attractively printed texts intended for such readers. Many address practical questions of how to live as a Muslim in the modern world and the perils of neglecting Islamic obligations, and not all appeal to reason and moderation. Many of these books have bold, eye-catching covers and sensational titles such as The Terrors of the Grave, or What Follows Death (1987), while other, more subdued works offer advice to young women on how to live as Muslims today. Often based on the sermons of popular preachers, Islamic books are written in a breezy, colloquial style rather than the cadences of traditional literary Arabic, and are sold on sidewalks and outside mosques rather than in bookstores. While Egyptian Nobel Laureate Naguib Mahfouz is considered successful if he sells 5,000 copies of one of his novels in a year in his own country, Islamic books often have sales in six figures.

Increasingly in the Muslim world, religious beliefs are self-consciously held, explicitly expressed, and systematized. It is no longer sufficient simply to ‘be’ Muslim and to follow Muslim practices. One must reflect upon Islam and defend one’s views. In Oman, one of the few places where all three Muslim traditions--Sunni, Shi‘a, and Ibadi--converge, the debates can be spirited indeed, as one young Omani, who recalled the late night dormitory arguments he and other students had in secondary school.

Roughly 90 percent of the world’s Muslims are Sunni or ‘orthodox’ Muslim. Nine percent--mostly in Iran, but with significant minorities in southern Lebanon, Iraq, Syria, Pakistan, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, and coastal Oman--are Shi‘a, or ‘sectarian,’ and believe that legitimate religious leadership of the worldwide Muslim community should remain in the hands of the family of the Prophet, Muhammad. The Ibadiyya, not as well known, believe that anyone can can become head of the Muslim community, provided that they possess the necessary piety and moral qualities. The Ibadiyya are few in number and clustered mostly in northern Oman (where they constitute nearly half the country’s population), East Africa, southern Algeria, and Libya.

When I visited al-Hamra in 1979, many Muslims could practice their faith without reducing it to formal principles or comparing it with ‘other’ Muslim or non-Muslim doctrines. Now, however, most of the younger inhabitants of the oasis are aware of what it means to be an Ibadi Muslim, and how Ibadi practices and doctrines--on such questions as whether or not believers see God on Judgment Day--differ from Sunni and Shi‘i ones. In the early 1980s, when Ibadi university students went to study abroad in places such as Tucson, Arizona, they were shocked to find other Muslim students describing them as kaffirs, or unbelievers, and asked Oman’s mufti, an Ibadi religious leader, how to respond. One result was videocassettes and pamphlets explaining Ibadi doctrine and faith and arguing that Ibadi principles agree in most respects with Sunni ones.

The rise of literacy and the spread of communications--with tapes of popular preachers being played incessantly in taxis and other settings, and banned literature being copied almost everywhere--have prompted more Muslims to interpret Islam’s texts, classical or modern, and apply them to modern life. They offer advice in popular ‘how to’ pamphlets: how to lead the life of a Muslim woman in a modern city, how to raise children the Islamic way, how to follow Islamic banking and business practices. In other pamphlets and cassettes, often clandestinely circulated, Muslims measure particular regimes by ‘Islamic’ standards. Sometimes, as on the Arabian Peninsula, these standards are progressive, insisting upon governmental integrity and upholding human rights. Often they are reactionary, restricting women’s public roles and advocating religious censorship and control of schools.

In Muslim-majority countries, many regimes court popularity by emphasizing their Islamic credentials and spelling out, in state-approved schoolbooks, standards that governments must meet. In Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and other countries, dissidents have succeeded at times in embarrassing the governments by pointing out performances that fall short of such proclaimed standards. Some regimes try by various means to restrict what is said in public. In Oman, for instance, a special government department churns out model sermons for the ‘guidance’ of approved mosque preachers. In Morocco’s large cities, mosques are kept locked, except during hours of formal prayer, to prevent their use by unauthorized ‘study groups.’ In most countries, the regime carefully regulates broadcast and print media. But

through alternative media, including cassettes and photocopies, the multitudinous voices of dissent and difference continue to be heard.

The particular situation in each country and region varies widely, but everywhere there is a collapse of earlier, hierarchical notions of religious authority based on a claimed mastery of fixed bodies of religious texts and recognition by a prior generation of scholars. In Central Asia in the early 1990s, a Tajik garage mechanic became the leader of the most popular Islamic movement in the region. Even when there are state-appointed religious authorities--as in Oman, Saudi Arabia, Iran, Egypt, Malaysia, and some of the Central Asian republics--there no longer is any guarantee that their word will be heeded, or even that they themselves will follow the lead of the regime.

No Muslims--whether their outlook be deemed ‘fundamentalist,’ ‘traditionalist,’ or ‘modernist’--have been unaffected by the sweeping changes of recent decades. Islam has been democraticized. Like Martin Luther at the Diet of Worms in 1521, more and more Muslims today claim attachment to God’s unmediated word, as interpreted only by their conscience.

But that does not mean that Muslim tradition is simply being discarded. Rather, it is being examined and discussed. As the Syrian reformer Muhammad Shahrur well knows, the forces supporting conventional interpretations of God’s word remain strong. And many debates are in progress.

Thus was evident last summer in Damascus in what could be called the ‘duel of the wedding speeches’ (subsequently available on videotape, of course). First, at the wedding of Muhammad Shahrur’s daughter, some 600 guests--including many state and Ba‘th party officials and one non-Syrian (me)--heard Jawdat Sa‘id explain Islamic beliefs and their relation to current events. Then, two days later, at another Damascus wedding, Sa‘id Ramadan al-Buti, a popular Syrian television preacher who strongly opposes Shahrur’s views, spoke in response. After referring to the talk given at the recent wedding of the daughter of ‘a certain well-known engineer,’ he declared: ‘Just as one

goes to a medical doctor for illness and an architect to build a house, for Islam one should go only to specialists formally trained in the religious sciences.'

The Islamic Reformation is a protean phenomenon, its ultimate outcome far from clear. Muhammad Shahrur maintains that democracy is a fundamental tenet of Islam, and his proposition seems to have growing appeal. But most Arab regimes remain authoritarian. In Algeria, where Islamist radicals employ terrorism against a brutally repressive military regime, and in certain other Muslim countries, the new Islamic self-consciousness and fervor may result in an even more severe authoritarianism, at least in the short run. Elsewhere--in Malaysia, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and other Arabian Peninsula states, Morocco, and Egypt--conservative or relatively liberal regimes have sought to accommodate (or at least to appear to accommodate) Islamist views. In still other countries, such as Jordan, regimes have tried to balance Islamist concerns with secular politics, and to incorporate religious politics into a parliamentary system.

Over the long term, I think, rising literacy and education, together with the proliferation of new media, may well foster the growth of pluralism, tolerance, and civility. People learn from experience, at least sometimes. In the early 1980s, for example, I heard many people in the Gulf speak with admiration of the Islamic revolution in Iran. By the middle of that decade, the same people--committed Muslim activists who wanted to see Islamic values permeate political and social life--were decidedly cool to the revolution. In Iran today, there is much frustration with the dominant conservative and extremist mullahs. The clash of views was evident at the Islamic summit meeting in Tehran last December. Although Iran's supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khameini, excoriated the United States and the West, Iranian President Muhammad Khatemi, elected in an unexpected landslide last May, spoke of Islam's 'spirit of justice and tolerance,' and urged learning from 'the positive accomplishments of the Western civil society.'

Meanwhile, both the Islamist extremism in Algeria and its state-sponsored counterpart has dampened the appeal to Moroccans of a more 'Islamic' government, and Taliban rule in Afghanistan serves as a negative example to all its neighboring countries. In Jordan and Lebanon, where Islamists have

been drawn into the electoral process, there has been a gradual shift away from radicalism, as Islamist parties seek to appeal to wider constituencies.

In Turkey, people's views have been evolving rapidly. In 1992, 1993, and 1994, rural and urban Turks were asked whether Turkey was 'Muslim,' 'European,' or 'both.' Some 20 percent consistently said 'European.' But the proportion who answered 'Muslim' shrank from 37 percent in 1992 to 25 percent in 1994, while the segment that responded 'both' correspondingly grew--from 25 percent to 36. Although figures for later years are not available, it is likely that this trend toward embracing both European and Muslim identities has continued. Islamic activists outside the Refah Party are seeking to encourage the spread of Islamic values, including respect for the rights of non-Muslims and education for both women and men at all levels of Turkish society. Even the 'fundamentalist' Refah Party is credited with drawing women into grass-roots politics, though it resists giving them leadership roles.

The Muslim world has its share of militant fanatics, and they have been responsible for a great deal of death and destruction. Only last November, for instance, Islamic militants who have been seeking to destabilize the Egyptian government massacred 58 foreign tourists at a temple in Luxur. Just days before that, newspaper front pages told of the convictions of Muslim extremists in connection with the 1993 bombing of New York's World Trade Center, carried out to punish the United States for its support of Israel. But the Muslim world certainly has no monopoly on fanaticism or terrorism, as the 1995 bombing of the federal building in Oklahoma City attests.

It is dangerously misleading to view developments in the Muslim world in terms of a clash between Islamic 'fundamentalists' and Western civilization. There is a 'fundamentalist' crisis, Malaysia's Muhammad Mahathir said recently, but it is not the one perceived by religious and political authorities in many Muslim-majority countries and by some Western commentators. The real crisis, he said--correctly, in my view--lies in the need to encourage more Muslims to shun the extremism of the few and to get back to the true fundamentals of their faith--including a commitment to tolerance and civility. The Qur'an (Sura 5, verse 48) appears to give a final answer to the role of the Muslim community in a multi-community world: 'To each among you, We

have prescribed a law and a way for acting. If God had so willed, he might have made you a single community, but [he has not done so] that he may test you in what he has given you; so compete in goodness.'

Civility and tolerance will not prevail without struggle. The ideals of civil society, deomcracy, and open debate over basic values--ideals that are explicit in the works of Syria's Muhammad Shahrur, Turkey's Fethullah Gülen, and Iran's Abdokrim Soroush--are up against strong vested interests. These ideals threaten the sinecures of many preachers, specialists in religious law, educators, and clerics. Not surprisingly, some efforts at reform have been met with threats of violence.

But what I call the Islamic Reformation is nevertheless in progress. Many Muslims, of course, would resist the analogy with the Protestant Reformation. Shortly before writing this essay, I visited Turkey's Fethullah Gülen. At the end of a spirited discussion on how the shift from face-to-face meetings to television had influenced his message. I told him of the title I had in mind for my essay: 'Inside the Islamic Reformation.' With polite amusement, he replied, 'It's your title, not mine.' Gülen explained that he saw his work--which includes the idea that there is no contradiction between an Islamic worldview and a scientific one--as an effort to persuade people to understand and live by the basic teachings of Islam. I pointed out that Martin Luther had said something very similar. Luther saw his work as returning to the fundamentals of belief, not creating anything new. Only later did others see his ideas and actions as instigating the 'Reformation.'

I must concede, however, that the analogy with the Protestant Reformation is imperfect. In the Muslim world today, there is no one central figure or hierarchy of authority against whom the people are rebelling. There are instead many authorities, and, despite numerous claims to the contrary, no movement or individual speaks for all Muslims. Many thinkers who write about Islam freely admit this. Muhammad Shahrur, for instance, acknowledges that his upbringing as an Arab nationalist has deeply influenced his thinking about Islam. Indonesia's moderate Nurcholish Madjid likewise recognizes that his writings on the future of Islamic civil society appeal mostly to Indonesians. Shi'i thinkers such as the Iraqi Shaykh al-

Rikabi, now living in Damascus, admit that their primary audience is the Shi’a.

The recognition by these and other leading reformers in the Muslim world today that different religious beliefs and practices exist, and that they should be tolerated and debated, is one reason to be hopeful about the eventual outcome of the Islamic Reformation. Perhaps even Muhammad Shahrur’s notion that democracy is a fundamental tenet of Islam will take root and flower. In any case, whatever the outcome, the Islamic Reformation is under way.

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#notes

*** Introduction

The most profound long-term transformations in the Muslim world today occur through the actions of middle-class professionals and religious intellectuals “taking charge” of their faith, organizing people and popularizing ideas, and persuading large and diverse audiences, rather than leave Islam’s public expression exclusively to religious scholars. The increasing challenge of rapid-paced new media innovations in the digital age can advance positive values but also create paralyzing doubt.

The middle-class professionals who make movements work and also challenge established authority have the talents of the modern and postmodern bricoleur, to invoke the term made famous by anthropologist Claude Lévi-Strauss. Bricoleurs are able to combine seemingly disparate ideas and practices in order to make something new—even if some maintain that they are sustaining the old. They are able to rethink religion outside traditional boundaries, master rapid technological shifts, organize movements and affinity groups, work behind the scenes, and recognize the institutional challenges of persuading diverse audiences, allowing publicity and outreach to trump secrecy.

Some historical examples, many developed in the pre-digital age, suggest how the skills of “mainstreaming” attracts new audiences and transforms existing ones. The distinguished Indian jurist, Syed Ameer Ali (1849-1928) was a pioneer in presenting the Prophet Muhammad to an English-speaking audience. His Life and Teachings of Mohammed (1873) might in retrospect be seen as infusing the life and person of the Prophet with prevailing Victorian values, but his biography of Muhammad and corollary writings remained influential for decades.[1] More recent examples include Sayyed Hossein Nasr (b. 1933). With an undergraduate degree in physics from MIT and a doctorate from Harvard in the history of science, Nasr left Iran at the time of the 1978-1979 Iranian revolution. His writings on Islam since then have focused on Sufism as the key to understanding the role of religion and faith in modern life.[2] Somewhat parallel are some recent writings of Tariq Ramadan. His Quest for Meaning (2010), for

example, explains that at the core of all religious traditions is an aspiration for believers to find their “inner balance.” [3] Were one to read Quest without reference to Ramadan’s name, it would be challenging to identify the text as belonging to a specific religious tradition. “Mainstreaming” can also engage large numbers of supporters and advocates to translate into different languages, elaborate in scholarly and popular contexts, and disseminate ideas in different media, including the printed text, television, and YouTube. A primary example is Yusuf al-Qaradawi.[4]

The advocates of mainstreaming can be criticized for vagueness and a lack of specificity in favor of affirming individual empowerment, and the opponents of mainstreaming can be tenacious. This process of “mainstreaming,” not unique to the Muslim world, includes tolerance (or at least awareness) for other faiths and also accommodation to alternative Muslim religious ideas and practices.

“Mainstreaming” results in presenting Islam as an integral and acceptable part of civic life. Participation in “mainstreaming,” best thought of more as a process than as a specific outcome, requires the development of concrete skills and aptitudes, the importance of which varies according to context. The outcome of mainstreaming—increased levels of civility and tolerance or its very opposite—is far from certain.

More certain is that the mix of how people communicate and perceive the common good (al-maslaha al-‘amma) has been significantly transformed. How innovative ideas and practices take hold and change societies vary significantly over time and place. Understanding how the digital age shapes ideas and practices is to look to major transformations in the past in order to discern how earlier “big” ideas took hold.

*** Al-‘urwa al-wuthqa: Seventh-Century Arabia and Beyond

To the “ties that bind,” the multiple and layered bonds of loyalty and obligation that range from parents and kin, spouses, town and tribe, and the wider community of believers in seventh century Arabia—the Qur’an (2: 256, 31: 22) added the “firmest tie” (al-‘urwa al-wuthqa). This tie linked individual believers to God. At least in principle, this firmest link preceded, but did not replace, other ties. In practice, it can be argued that a key issue throughout Muslim history from the seventh century to the present has been to communicate how this “firmest tie” relates to other aspects of social identity, responsibility, trust, and “belonging” to a social group or community of believers.

Al-‘urwa al-wuthqa in the seventh century, with its emphasis on equality and personal responsibility among believers, was “remarkably modern . . . in the high degree of commitment, involvement, and participation expected from the rank-and-file members of the community.”[5]

Yet to the original audiences in seventh century Arabia, the “firmest tie” did not always appear more immediate and compelling than tribal and kin loyalties. Upon Muhammad’s death in 632, the period of the so-called ridda, or apostasy, many tribes considered themselves released from submission to Islam. In other words, the ties of trust and loyalty negotiated by the early Islamic community were incompletely realized. Al-Tabari (839-923) records a hadith in which a member of the Bani Rabi‘a meets with Musaylima bin Habib, the “lying” prophet, also from the Bani Rabi‘a. The visitor asks Musaylima, “Who comes to you?” and Musaylima answers, “al-Rahman.” “In light or in shadows?” “In shadows,” replies Musaylima. The visitor then says, “I testify that you are a liar and that Muhammad is telling the truth. But a liar of the Rabi‘a is better for us than a true prophet of the Mudar [Muhammad’s tribal group].[6]

Of course, the conditions in which the “firmest tie” was realized and actually took precedence over other ties of obligation and responsibility has been a core question throughout Muslim history and identity. Since the nineteenth century, for example, nationalists have claimed that the ties to nation must have a more compelling hold than alternate obligations and loyalties, and

they have often secured public allegiance, or at least apparent acquiescence, to such claims.

It is reasonable to assume that first news of the “firmest tie” spread by word of mouth, with reliable information and the nineteenth-century equivalent of “fake news” often hard to untangle. To make a leap of many centuries and a different context, in the summer of 1789 in the French countryside, rumors spread about “vengeful aristocrats bent on the destruction of peasants’ property. It was not true. The Great Fear, as it is now known, tipped France into revolution with a flurry of fact-free gossip and rumor.”[7] Today, of course, rumors fly much faster, since word of mouth is buttressed by an array of digital and electronic media, making the search for reliable accounts significantly more difficult.

*** Sharing Ideas, Emotions, and Practices in the Digital Age

If we look at the most profound changes in how ideas get communicated, there are three major drivers, to use the language of political science, that have influenced how ideas move through society and across geographical and linguistic boundaries. The first is the greater ease of travel. Travel can be for the hajj as well as visits to regional shrines, for commerce or labor migration, or from the necessity of war, or regional conflict. Both pilgrimage and migration have profound effects on the religious imagination. As the late Zafar Ishaq Ansari observed over two decades ago, the boundaries between the West and “the rest” are no longer exclusively territorial.[8]

Second is mass higher education, which has meant the spread of literacy to large numbers of people, women and men, throughout the world.[9] I vividly recall traveling in small towns and villages throughout the Arab world in the 1960s. In ‘Afich, a small town in Iraq’s Diwaniya province in 1968, men gathered in a coffee shop most afternoons where a literate tribal leader read aloud the newspaper that arrived each afternoon from Baghdad. I saw similar scenes in upper Egypt the same year. In Morocco’s Amazigh (Berber)

highlands in 1968, someone literate in Arabic or French often translated aloud local newspapers in those languages into Tamazigh for their neighbors.

Before widespread literacy in small towns and rural areas in some regions, even the Arabic spoken word failed to reach many Arabs conversant only in their regional dialect. In Morocco in the late 1960s, the main mid-day newscast was read only in formal Arabic, which half a century ago many people could not follow. When traveling in Morocco's countryside in this earlier period, I often was asked to translate from "radio" Arabic to the Moroccan dialect. Now, of course, I'm out of that job because formal Arabic is widely understood. In any case, the media-savvy Moroccan government also broadcasts many programs in colloquial Arabic and in the various tamazight dialects to reach large numbers of its citizens. Equally important, the mastery of formal Arabic allows more people to talk back in public space than was possible in an earlier era.

Third, the new communications media have become increasingly interactive. By the 1990s, the proliferation of video cassettes and subsequently DVDs, combined with satellite broadcasting, loosened the hold of state broadcasters over the imagination of large numbers of people. Before Internet and mobile communications were widely available, the proliferation of photocopiers and fax machines allowed competing messages to be readily communicated independently of authorized channels and distributed among networks of like-minded people. Cellphones, and especially smartphones, combined with the wide array of means of communicating via the Internet, make censorship less effective than it was in earlier eras.

*** The Digital Age and the Public Sphere

In the 1970s, the humble audiocassette—easy to duplicate, conceal, and smuggle—facilitated the rise of new and dissident voices beyond the written, printed, and photocopied word. Since the advent in the 1990s of the internet age, communication has become even easier, and over the last 15 years

platforms such as Facebook (2004), Twitter (2006), and Whatsapp (2009) have further facilitated the fragmentation of religious and political authority.

Religious innovation does not advance through technological change alone. One needs people adept in seizing the opportunity that technical innovation offers and the ability to work with others in new and not fully predictable ways to “mainstream” religious innovation.

“Mainstreaming” involves four major skills. First are intellectuals who “take charge” of developing ideas and use them to persuade large audiences, especially in states where organized non-governmental movements are strongly discouraged.

The second set of skills is the overt, public organizing of people and communicating effectively. States, including both open and totalitarian ones, depend on middle class professionals, just as successful religious and civic movements as different as those in Indonesia and Morocco, to “sell” the ideas and practices of certain ways of putting faith to work in society.

A third related skill is working quietly behind the scenes to further an interest or cause where weak forms of civic empowerment are linked to strong forms of structure, such as in some countries, where major state-sponsored initiatives are underway to use the “Islamic studies” curriculum of primary and secondary schools to create a template for inculcating values of critical thinking, gender parity, and religious tolerance. Likewise, the February 2004 revision of Moroccan family law, the mudawwana, to enhance the rights of women, was in preparation for years but enacted only in the wake of major terrorist attacks on Casablanca in May 2003. The May attacks empowered the monarchy to undertake a bold major religious and civic reform without significant opposition. The same skills of working behind the scenes can also be used surreptitiously to discredit alternate views and distort opposing messages.

A final skill is that of publicity trumping secrecy. Publicity can overcome the suspicion of groups and ideas, and in this way contributes significantly to

“normalizing” them. It also encourages the “objectification” of religious ideas and practices, in which ideas that previously were primarily implicit become implicit, assuming a particular shape. One result is that certain questions come to be foregrounded in the consciousness of large numbers of believers, such as What is my religion? Why is it important to my life? And How do my beliefs guide my conduct? Objectification does not mean seeing religion as a uniform or monolithic entity, although it is precisely that for some thinkers.

These explicit and “objective” questions are distinctly modern ones, even as some legitimate their practices by asserting a return to authentic established traditions. In exploring these questions, it is easier to focus on how certain religious beliefs and practices have been objectified in the consciousness of many people. This issue is easier to address than why, but it has also been more neglected.

The digital age has profoundly affected the meaning and context of the public sphere and religious belief and practice with it. Just as writing and print created often unanticipated new forms of community and transformed authority and social boundaries, so has the digital age. Increasingly open and accessible forms of communication make contests over the authoritative use of the symbolic language of Islam, as with other religious beliefs and practices, increasingly global and open. The struggle over people’s imaginations now involves both a heightened competition and contest over both the interpretation of symbols, and a struggle over the control of the institutions, formal and informal, that produce and sustain them.

In the 1970s, the humble audiocassette—easy to duplicate, conceal, and smuggle—facilitated the rise of new and dissident voices beyond the written, printed, and photocopied word. Since the advent in the 1990s of the Internet, the ideas, images, and practices of alternative social and political worlds enter domestic space, even bedrooms through cable television, DVDs, and Internet, creating new understandings of locality and distinction that make social space more fluid.[10] In the Arabic-speaking world, rapidly rising levels of literacy and familiarity with an educated Arabic, formerly restricted to religious or secular elites, enable large numbers of people to communicate with wider audiences in the common language of the Arabic of the classroom

and the media, rather than in local dialects that are not understood beyond one’s own region.

For example, an al-Qa‘ida recruitment videotape that circulated throughout the Arab world and South Asia around May 2001 invoked the classical image of the hijra, the emigration of the Prophet Muhammad from Mecca to Medina in 622 to escape possible death at the hands of unbelievers and to found an Islamic community. This historical reference, known to all Muslims, is essential to understanding a scene showing Osama bin Laden and his followers on horseback in Afghanistan, implying that they are engaged in a contemporary hijra. The audio is delivered in the Arabic of newscasts and television commentary, and not in dialect, together with subtitles in English in some versions.[11] The audio, together with the “zippers,” lines of text that stream underneath the pictures, would not have been possible prior to the spread of mass education and the new digitized mass media, which greatly amplified the numbers of people able to follow the video’s narrative.

The expanding digital media and the multiplication of satellite channels has expanded the possibilities for linking religious ideas and practices to society and social issues, invoking a wide mix of reason and emotion. At one end of a wide spectrum are extremist videos. At the other end are the debates concerning religious ideas and practices on al-Jazeera, which caught the attention of the entire Arab world. For the first time on this satellite channel, one could watch, for example, a debate between Yusuf al-Qaradawi and secularist Sadek al-Azm, in which al-Azm could explain, over vigorous denials by al-Qaradawi, what secularism meant to a wide audience. Initially broadcast on May 27, 1997, copies were readily available in Damascus, Kuwait, Cairo, Rabat and elsewhere throughout the Arab world.[12]

Jon Anderson and I analyzed the rapid changes in media in the Muslim world through 2003,[13] just before platforms such as Facebook (2004), Twitter (2006), and Whatsapp (2009) appeared. These platforms further facilitated the fragmentation of religious and political authority. In the Arabic-speaking world, rapidly rising levels of literacy and familiarity with an educated Arabic, formerly restricted to an elite, enable large numbers of people to respond to those in authority in the common language of the Arabic of the classroom

and the media rather than in local dialects that are not understood beyond one’s own region. The “common language” can be a breezy transregional colloquial rather than the correct if limited language of television and radio newscasts.

A major change that has occurred over the last decade is the increasing awareness of how words and images can be adulterated, and how messages and images can be manipulated for maximum effect—for advertising, political, religious, or other purposes.[14] The cutting of phrases has been a well-known technique, today much easier than in the era of reel-to-reel tape recordings, when such editing was accomplished through physical splicing. Now such editing or altering of what Manuel Castells has called “real virtuality” is often discernable only to trained specialists.[15] The “network society” enables transregional ideas to be scaled down and applied to a multitude of local societies, and understood in ways never originally intended. The term algorithm has now entered the general vocabulary, suggesting how messages and images can now be crafted to reach individuals in ways not imagined by propagandists, preachers, religious movements, advertisers, or others in earlier eras.

*** Conclusion

Advancing levels of education, greater ease of travel, and the rise of new communications media have contributed to the emergence of a public sphere in which large numbers of people, and not just an educated, political, and economic elite, are getting a say in political and religious issues. The result has been challenges to authoritarianism, the fragmentation of religious and political authority, and increasingly open discussions of issues related to the “common good.” The ideas and practices of “dark Internet,” the “deep state,” and “hidden” agendas may sometimes be illusory, but not necessarily. Emergence into the digital age, once could be seen as incrementally positive; most people now would see current opportunities and trends as uneven and often contradictory.

The mainstreaming of Islamic ideas and practices contributes to an increasingly “public Islam”[16] in which religious scholars, self-ascribed religious authorities, secular intellectuals, Sufi orders, mothers, students, workers, engineers, and many others contribute to civic debate and public life. In this “public” capacity, “Islam” makes a difference in configuring the politics and social life in large parts of the globe, and not just among self-ascribed religious authorities. At the same time, the advent of the second, post-Facebook digital age offers many reasons for caution in understanding how religious ideas and practices, like those in other fields, develop, take hold, and can be distorted.

Dale F. Eickelman

He is Ralph and Richard Lazarus Professor of Anthropology and Human Relations Emeritus at Dartmouth College, USA. His publications include Moroccan Islam: Tradition and Society in a Pilgrimage Center (1976; Arabic, 1989), Muslim Travelers: Pilgrimage, Migration, and the Religious Imagination (co-edited with James Piscatori, 1990), Public Islam and the Common Good (co-edited with Armando Salvatore, 2002), Muslim Politics (co-authored with James Piscatori, new ed., 2003), The Middle East and Central Asia: An Anthropological Approach, 4th ed. (2002), New Media in the Muslim World: The Emerging Public Sphere (co-edited with Jon Anderson, 2nd ed., 2003), Knowledge and Power in Morocco (1985, Arabic 2009), and Higher Education Investment in the Arab States of the Gulf: Strategies for Excellence and Diversity (co-edited with Rogaia Mustafa Abusharaf (2017), and 120 articles and book chapters. A former President of the Middle East Studies Association of North America, Fellow of the Institute for Advanced Study (Princeton), and of the Wissenschaftskolleg zu Berlin, Professor Eickelman currently serves as senior advisor to Kuwait’s first private liberal arts university, the American University of Kuwait. In 2009, he was named a Carnegie Scholar for a two-year period, and in 2011 he received the Distinguished Scholar Award from the Middle East Section of the American Anthropological Association.

Watch the panel "Religious Discourse and the Public Sphere: Dynamics and Influences" including Pr. Dale F. Eickelman's lecture:

[[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BUV9yuoQGMQ]]

[1] Syed Ameer Ali, A Critical Examination of the Life and Teachings of Mohammed (London: Williams and Norgate, 1873). The book was reprinted and revised several times in Ameer Ali’s lifetime, often with changes in title. It remains in print.

[2] Sayyed Hossein Nasr, The Garden of Truth: The Vision and Promise of Sufism, Islam’s Mystical Tradition (New York: HarperOne, 2007. Noted Shi‘a scholar Andrew Newman (personal communication, 24 July 2018) notes the strong resonance between theosophy, with its assumptions that there is an underlying meaning underneath surface realities, a belief that transcends many religious traditions.

[3] Tariq Ramadan, The Quest for Meaning: Developing a Philosophy of Pluralism (London: Penguin, 2012 [orig. 2010].

[4] See Bettina Graf and Jakob Skovgaard-Peterson, Global Mufti: The Phenomenon of Yusuf al-Qaradawi (London: Hurst, 2009).

[5] Robert Bellah, Beyond Belief: Essays on Religion in a Post-Traditional World (New York: Harper & Row, 1970), pp. 150-51.

[6] Abu Ja`far Muhammad ibn Jarir al-Tabari (839-923), Ta’rikh, ed. Muhammad Abu Fadil Ibrahim (Cairo: Dar al-Ma‘arif, 1964), p. 1937

[7] “Falsehood Flies,” The Economist, 10 March 2018, 80.

[8] See Muslim Travellers: Pilgrimage, Migration, and the Religious Imagination, ed. Dale F. Eickelman and James Piscatori (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990; Zafar Ishaq Ansari, Comments Made at the International Symposium, “The Islamic World and Global Co-operation: Preparing for the 21st Century.” Kuala Lumpur, April 26, 1997.

[9] Dale F. Eickelman, “Mass Higher Education and the Religious Imagination in Contemporary Arab Societies,” American Ethnologist 19, no. 4 (November 1992), 1-13.

[10] Christiane Brosius and Melissa Bucher, “Introduction: Image Journeys,” in Image Journeys: Audio-Visual Media and Cultural Change in India, ed. Christiane Brosius and Melissa Bucher

[11] Excerpts of the video was available through 2007 via the Columbia University Center for International Affairs website ([[http://www.ciaonet.org/cbr/cbr00/video/excerpts/][www.ciaonet.org/cbr/cbr00/video/excerpts/]]). It is not currently available.

[12] The debate aired as one of the early presentations of Faisal al-Kassem’s “The Opposite Direction” (al-ittijah al-mu‘akis). AL-Kassem recollects the impact of the program at the time ([[https://www.aljazeera.com/archive/2006/11/200849162526819525.html][https://www.aljazeera.com/archive/2006/11/200849162526819525.html]]). Also see John F. Burns, “Arab TV Gets a New Slant: Newscasts without Censorship,” New York Times, 4 July 1999, p. 1.

[13] Dale F. Eickelman and Jon W. Anderson, New Media in the Muslim World: The Emerging Public Sphere, 2nd edition (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2003).

[14] Boris Thiolay, “Quand le djihad infiltre Internet,” L’Express, 25 July 2018, 25-33.Thiolay writes only of extremist use of the Internet, although his argument applies equally to all forms of Internet-mediated digital communication.

[15] See Manuel Castells, Networks of Outrage and Hope: Social Movements in the Internet Age, 2nd edition (London: Polity, 2015), and Hany Farid, “Recruiting Terrorists: We’re Losing the Fight Against Online Extremism—Here’s Why ([[http://thehill.com/opinion/national-security/399962-recruiting-terrorists-were-losing-the-fight-against-online][http://thehill.com/opinion/national-security/399962-recruiting-terrorists-were-losing-the-fight-against-online]]).

[16] Public Islam and the Common Good, ed. Armando Salvatore and Dale F. Eickelman (Leiden: Brill, 2004).

#title U.S. Interest in Oman

#author Dale F. Eickelman

#date April 16, 1983, Section 1, Page 23

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#topics

Since Oman is the only Persian Gulf state openly committed to an American military presence in the region, the Administration should consider how America can defend the Gulf without detriment to Oman's domestic stability,

which has received relatively little attention, and to our long-term strategic goals.

Although only "facilities" were granted in 1980, our military presence in Oman, which has 940,000 people, is increasingly evident. Against the current of most Arab rulers, Sultan Qabus bin Said, whose state visit to Washington ended yesterday, boldly supports most aspects of our Middle East policy. Other Middle Eastern rulers have learned that explicit commitment to our geopolitical strategy is a double-edged sword, enhancing their military potential but contributing in the long run to domestic instability.

American policy is that our military presence will confront the Soviet Union "with the prospect of a major conflict should it seek to reach oil resources in the Gulf." What does this policy mean to Oman?

Elements of the Rapid Deployment Force (now the United States Central Command) have already conducted Operations Bright Star and Jade Tiger on Omani soil. Since fiscal 1981, $165 million has been appropriated for military aid for Oman, with more to come. Military construction is beginning in earnest. Just as before in Iran, it is increasingly difficult for Americans to maintain a low profile. America's unofficial presence is more evident, too. An American company serves as oil consultant and loans managers to develop the remote northern frontier regions, long neglected in contrast to the adjacent oilrich United Arab Emirates. The company's technical achievements are satisfactory, but young Omanis resent having a small band of Omani and foreign courtiers decide their priorities. They see these advisers as increasingly cutting the Sultan off from what they think. This attitude is echoed by Omanis in the military, where British officers still hold key posts. As for foreign policy, one senior British adviser has said of Omani opinion: "When you have a family of children, you don't consult with them until they've grown up a bit." In an absolute monarchy, the ruler takes all the praise and blame. One young official said: 'We're tired of being treated like children by the Sultan and saying, 'Thank you, your Majesty,' for everything. We may be hard to work with and not reach decisions quickly, but we have to learn." That such a comment can be made is in itself a tribute to Sultan Qabus's achievements since his 1970 coup against his father, who was long out of touch with the people and losing against a Communist-supported

insurgency in Dhofar, Oman's southern province. Sultan Qabus ended the insurgency with a "hearts and minds" program. The Sultan has built Oman's modern infrastructure almost from scratch. Despite continuing regional inequalities, younger Omanis now take for granted a vastly improved standard of living. Schooling has made many Omanis articulate, even if many feel no one listens to them. The Sultan tries to be more attuned than his advisers to his people's aspirations and to changing attitudes toward late 20th century Islamic monarchies. Oman's appointed Consultative Assembly is just over a year old. Despite severe restrictions, including secrecy, placed on its deliberations, Sultan Qabus says it has formulated sound policy advice for him. But many Omanis inside and outside the regime say that confidential recommendations do not constitute sufficient consultation. Take corruption. It is treated with official silence. As recently as 1979, many Omanis dismissed as customary perks the barely hidden commissions that some ministers and palace aides took on Government contracts and the blatant conflict of interest involved. But today the details of who gets what are openly discussed - and resented. The Sultan has tried to limit abuses, but the public still sees the old pattern. Rightly or wrongly, the corruption is largely attributed to the Western connection. The appeal of Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini's Iran to Oman's educated youth should not be discounted. They see Iran as having developed, against all odds, an Islamic identity tied to neither great power and uncorrupted by the West. With the Dhofar war over, the claim of an imminent Soviet inspired menace rings hollow to them. The Sultan's fear of Soviet aggression in the region is real. But this fear should not prevent him from broadening the base of participation in decision-making. If Oman if to avoid the fate of Iran, a former regional ally, the United States will best serve its strategic interest by focusing not only on military considerations but also by encouraging the Sultan to take steps that produce long-term domestic stability.

Dale F. Eickelman, an anthropologist at New York University and a frequent visitor to Oman, is writing a book about that country.

#title Only Arabs Can Usher Saddam Out

#subtitle The Western buildup in the Gulf affords no long-term answer to regional unrest

#author Dale Eickelman and Vitaly V. Naumkin

#authors Dale Eickelman, Vitaly V. Naumkin

#date September 7, 1990

#source Christian Science Monitor. <[[https://www.csmonitor.com/1990/0907/eick.html][csmonitor.com/1990/0907/eick.html]]>

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#topics

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Dale F. Eickelman, Lazarus Professor of anthropology and human relations at Dartmouth College, and Vitaly V. Naumkin, deputy director of the Institute of Oriental Studies, Moscow, frequently visit the Arab Gulf. They have organized a Soviet-American project on changing understandings of Middle Eastern politics and societies.

The “step-by-step” approach to the Gulf crisis checked Saddam Hussein’s further military advance. It will continue to work to the advantage of the international community, however, only if a regional, Arab-led solution comes next. Otherwise, Saddam Hussein will hold his own, and costs to regional and outside powers will become incalculable. Despite the unprecedented speed with which the United States-led military and economic sanctions against Iraq have become international ones, Saddam Hussein still represents a considerable threat to the region. He will not be easily dislodged from Kuwait and is rapidly becoming the champion of Arab nationalists and — more surprisingly — of Muslim fundamentalists. This support is an unanticipated result of the growing outside military presence in Saudi Arabia, a country

whose ruler claims the title of “Servant of the Two Holy Places,” and in neighboring states. The next step against Iraq must allow Saddam an exit short of total defeat. Arab and Muslim states must take the lead in shaping this option if it is to succeed.

A military solution carries unpredictable risks to civilians and the possibility of a widening conflict involving Israel. Moscow’s efforts to contain ethnic violence in the southern, principally Muslim, regions of the USSR, though only a partial comparison, show the limitations of outside intervention. Even for Egyptians, who are by no means “insiders” to the Arabian Peninsula, the memory of intervention in North Yemen in the 1960s suggests limitations to the use of troops, especially in populated areas such as Kuwait.

Saddam Hussein’s aggression against Kuwait affects the entire world, but the international community must turn to the Arab states themselves, possibly acting through the Arab League, to achieve regional stability. Action by the Arab states may require patient diplomacy and protracted negotiation, but it offers the best opportunity for lasting results.

The massive outside military buildup is already intensifying an arms race in the region, as countries strive for military “balance.” The United States has indicated a willingness to supply more arms to Saudi Arabia and Egypt, and other countries are certain to find willing suppliers as well.

As for economic sanctions, the blockade against Iraq is unlikely to bring about its defeat in the near future. As the crisis is prolonged, popular protest against the intervention of outside powers, and against Arab and Muslim states cooperating with them, will be directed at many governments in the region. Throughout the 1980s, US allies in the Gulf insisted that American forces maintain a low profile out of concern for the political consequences of such a presence.

Some US policymakers shared these concerns and saw a long-term danger in Washington’s being perceived as the supporter of conservative, inflexible

regimes. Foreign domination in the Arabian Peninsula led to political violence in the past and could do so again.

Saddam realizes that his appeals to social justice, Islamic values, and Arab unity, cynical as they sound to outsiders, draw on powerful undercurrents throughout the region. Muslim fundamentalists, for example, harbor no illusions about Saddam's commitment to Islam. North African, Egyptian, Yemeni, and Afghan fundamentalists initially sided with Kuwait but shifted their support to Iraq after foreign intervention. There is an irony in the support for Iraq from Arab nationalists: They deplore Israel's seizure of Arab land but accept Iraq's seizure of Kuwait.

Saddam's willingness to stand up to the US and Israel overrides such contradictions and carries a powerful appeal. A recent poll in Israel's occupied territories indicates that 62 percent of the population support Iraq's leader. Support for Iraq in Jordan, especially if King Hussein is obliged to close Aqaba to Iraqi trade, threatens major unrest. Demonstrations in other states remind Arab governments of their vulnerability; they know that such demonstrations may spread.

Saddam Hussein, an improbable supporter of democracy and social justice, can rely upon popular dissatisfaction with Arab governments throughout the region. Rumors circulating among informed Arab observers suggest that Saddam hopes a referendum in Kuwait will work against the return of its monarchy. Only 38 percent of Kuwaitis are citizens, and any referendum involving the country's long-term residents, including 350,000 Palestinians, is unlikely to favor the Al Sabah monarchy, liberal as it has been. No Gulf Arabs want Iraqi rule, but many would welcome an accelerated pace of political change. Foreign intervention is seen as setting back the clock on such a possibility.

As uneven as progress toward an "Arab" solution may appear, there is no viable alternative for a lasting settlement. Without such a solution, the unprecedented US-Soviet cooperation over the Gulf crisis, combined with other international actions, will take on the aura of a North-South, or West-Arab confrontation, replacing the conflict between East and West.

Few Middle Eastern conflicts can be reduced to a zero-sum game, and Iraq's seizure of Kuwait is no exception. A settlement that leaves an exit for Saddam Hussein is neither appeasement nor a reward for aggression. It offers greater potential for regional stability than further military initiative, the consequences of which are unpredictable. A short-term military victory could become a long-term disaster.

#title Iraqi Retreat From Kuwait No Solution Unless 'Linked' to Other Mideast Issues : Gulf: In Arab eyes, there are plenty of negotiating options short of war to assure honor. But can the U.S. separate Hussein from his cause?

#author Dale F. Eickelman

#date Dec. 23, 1990

#source Los Angeles Times. <[[https://www.latimes.com/archives/la-xpm-1990-12-23-op-9552-story.html][latimes.com/archives/la-xpm-1990-12-23-op-9552-story.html]]>

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#topics

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Dale F. Eickelman, Lazarus professor of anthropology and human relations and member of the Rockefeller Center for the Social Sciences at Dartmouth College, is president of the Middle Eastern Studies Association

Hanover, New Hampshire —

In the uncertain theater of gulf politics, the signals sent by both sides are confusing and difficult to interpret. They will become more so. Should war prove unavoidable, efforts now to seek a negotiated settlement will diminish

the chances that Saddam Hussein will be seen as an Arab martyr rather than an isolated, self-aggrandizing tyrant.

President Bush's willingness to send Secretary of State James A. Baker III to Baghdad for talks with Hussein and to meet Iraq's foreign minister in the White House still offers a major opportunity to create new outcomes to the crisis. Yet it is no longer possible to see just Iraqi withdrawal from Kuwait as a real solution. There must be linkages to other festering issues in the Middle East, even if these links are formally denied. In the eyes of Hussein's Arab friends and foes, the offer to talk is the first public sign that the White House is serious about exploring alternatives to war.

Allowing Hussein an exit at this point would be neither appeasement nor a reward for aggression. The words and actions of both Bush and Hussein have become charged with symbolic meanings and practical consequences beyond the issue of Iraq's occupation of Kuwait. Even Hussein's enemies concede his enhanced stature: He has stood up to the United States, whose vacillating policies (including those involving Iraq) are viewed with suspicion by many in the region; rekindled debate over the future of Israel's occupied territories (an outcome that even Hussein's Arab enemies welcome), and focused attention on the instability caused by vast inequalities between rich and poor Arab states.

For Bush, the confrontation with Iraq defines the practical limits of America's role in the post-Cold War era. The United States and its allies can "win" any confrontation with Iraq but only at the price of sustained future political losses--unless the Arab public is convinced that every alternative to war has been pursued.

Less certain is our skill in achieving a negotiated solution on the seemingly intractable issues that will come under discussion. As past dealings with Iran show, the U.S. track record is uneven in its use of intermediaries and in tolerating apparently ambiguous outcomes. The delivery of a Bible and a cake to Tehran by Robert C. McFarlane and his associates in May, 1986, provides only a bizarre example of our shortcomings in understanding Middle Eastern traditions of honor, face-saving and negotiation.

From an Arab point of view, Bush's offer to talk constitutes more than a face-saving gesture. It concedes nothing but publicly acknowledges Hussein as a worthy adversary, one who can be persuaded instead of humiliated and despised. In Middle Eastern terms, Hussein's reputation remains intact so long as he can claim to work for a worthy collective cause. He may privately be considered dishonorable, but it is public claims that count, and his reputation as a dangerous person effectively silences the contrary opinions of those within his reach. We must separate the causes that Hussein represents, often opportunistically, from the person and not deny the justice of his avowed causes because we dislike the messenger.

Sudden reversal of tactics does nothing to lessen Hussein's prestige, so a peaceful solution with no loss of face among his Arab public, the only public that counts for him, is still possible. His prior reversals, the most recent of which is his unconditional offer of peace with Iran and the relinquishment of his meager gains from a debilitating war, need not be explained in personality terms alone. Such a turnabout may seem surprising to Westerners because of our obsession with undying friendship, unconditional surrender and lasting peace. For Hussein's Arab audience, the essence of human affairs is provisionality. In changed circumstances, only a fanatic would stick to the same course.

Without fanfare, several Arabian peninsula countries, for example, have recently agreed to demarcate their frontiers after decades of bitter disagreement. In the case of Saudi Arabia and Oman, Saudi Arabia's reason for agreeing to a settlement was the unification of the two Yemens, a threat that may come to the fore once the crisis on its northern frontier abates. Settlements in the Middle East range between truces to agreements for "all time," in the Western sense. They are the best that mortals can achieve. Both sides anticipate betrayal and the reversal of loyalties but do their best to make the price of reversals higher than the cost of continued compliance.

Consider Hussein's labeling of Western and Japanese hostages as "guests," an Orwellian term even to Iraqis. In the world of the Iraqi leader's youth and in some parts of the Arab world today, the taking of hostages from adversary

groups is a means of preventing violence until intermediaries can negotiate a settlement.

Western governments rightly deny being influenced by hostages, but it is not unreasonable to assume that their presence forestalled preemptive Western air strikes against strategic Iraqi installations. Hussein's release of the hostages suggests that he now trusts the United States sufficiently to believe that negotiations can replace armed conflict. And even if the hostages have been replaced by an alternative deterrent--such as Iraq's ability to inflict damage on Kuwaiti and Saudi oil fields--the public reading is that the time has come to negotiate.

All parties to the current crisis can still extricate themselves with honor. Repelling the aggression against Kuwait and achieving an Iraqi withdrawal was beyond the means of any neighboring Arab state, so an outside power was called in, allowing Iraq to label Kuwait and Saudi Arabia as traitors to the Arab cause. Nonetheless, the solidarity of world opinion against Hussein, backed by an international force that includes Arabs and other Muslims, has reconstituted the honor of Kuwait and Saudi Arabia. These two countries have shown their strength through their allies and are now free to seek a settlement.

In Arab eyes, the United States shows honor by not yet using its overwhelming force against Iraq and in making every effort to allow Hussein an exit. Under Middle Eastern "rules," the stronger party does not bully the weaker one into submission without offering alternatives to physical force, as the United States and its allies skillfully continue to do. The weaker party is then seen to be intransigent and resistant to reason, especially if bona fide intermediaries, such as the Algerians, are also invoked to serve as guarantors. In the Middle East, intermediaries must be involved to secure an effective settlement.

If war can be forestalled, the likely alternative is protracted negotiations, both open and covert, in which an Iraqi withdrawal from Kuwait will be only one element. Resolving the Arab-Israeli conflict and the massive inequalities

of wealth between rich and poor states in the Arab world are real issues in the eyes of most Arabs, Israelis and Europeans.

Other “linkages” would require even more farsightedness by U.S. policy-makers, because they involve the participation of all states in the Middle East. A protracted U.S. presence in the gulf--now almost inevitable--will create expectations of U.S.-style democracy and popular participation on the autocratic Arabian peninsula. Kuwait’s government-in-exile is rising to this challenge; so must our other regional allies. Our long-term interests in the region lie with transformed polities in which an increasingly wide body of educated and informed citizens participate in major decisions, not with a narrow circle of rulers and their advisers who are often resistant to significant change.

If Hussein survives--and some argue that his total defeat would bring about greater instability than his continued existence--Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Israel, Syria and even Iran will have a common interest in containing him and weakening his power. It is not out of the question to envision an alliance or even a settlement of longstanding antagonisms between present-day adversaries as a result. Friends in the Middle East are often former enemies, for neither party harbors illusions about the other. Such a settlement would not wipe away the real and imagined injustices of the past but would pave the way to a less debilitating future. In Middle Eastern terms, that is a cause for hope.

Iraq can still consider a bold reversal of its course. Anwar Sadat claimed a “victory” over Israel in 1973--for so it is seen in many Arab eyes. It gave him the stature needed to fly to Jerusalem in 1977. Unfortunately, no current Middle Eastern leader is likely to win a Nobel Prize for imaginative political solutions. But if Hussein aspires to leadership, he can claim “victory” in Iraq’s total withdrawal from Kuwait. Paradoxically, the retreat could enhance his standing in the eyes of Iraqis and other Arabs.

#title First, Know the Enemy, Then Act

#subtitle A lack of outlets for opinions makes it easier for terrorists like Bin Laden

#author Dale F. Eickelman

#date Dec. 9, 2001

#source Los Angeles Times. <[[https://www.latimes.com/archives/la-xpm-2001-dec-09-op-eickelman-story.html][latimes.com/archives/la-xpm-2001-dec-09-op-eickelman-story.html]]>

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#topics

OXFORD, England —

In retrospect, the December 2000 report of the U.S. National Intelligence Council, “Global Trends 2015,” was chillingly prescient. It predicted that “terrorist tactics will become increasingly sophisticated and designed to achieve mass casualties.” At the same time, it envisioned a trend away from state-supported political terrorism and toward “more diverse, free-wheeling, transnational networks--enabled by information technology.” It forecast attacks “on U.S. soil.”

Now that those attacks have come, America will have to devise strategies to cope with terrorism--as have, to greater and lesser effect, England, Northern Ireland, France, Spain, Colombia, Peru, Sri Lanka, Japan, Algeria, Turkey and Israel.

As each of those countries has come to realize, the first step is to know one’s enemy. Al Qaeda differs from other terrorist movements in selecting targets on a global rather than a regional or local scale and in using tactics that

initially defied the imaginations of the most experienced counterterrorist specialists. Al Qaeda is also thoroughly modern, representing the dark side of globalization. Its membership transcends national boundaries, drawing from Muslim countries throughout the Middle East and South Asia. In a strange irony, the group's multinational makeup has its roots in the U.S.- and Saudi-approved recruitment of transnational Arab and other foreign fighters to the cause of expelling the Soviets from Afghanistan after they invaded in 1979. Al Qaeda, whose leadership includes many first drawn to Afghanistan in support of the anti-Soviet cause, has developed into a flexible multinational organization. Despite determined international surveillance, it has moved cash, people and weapons across frontiers.

Like the drug lords of Colombia in the 1980s, Al Qaeda is defensively organized. Its chain of command is not formal and hierarchical, so it is less open to destruction and interdiction. The Colombian drug lords offered plata o plomo--silver or lead, a bribe or a bullet--to induce cooperation or acquiescence. Al Qaeda, claiming to act in the name of Islam, pays out less than the drug barons because it makes stronger ideological claims. Its message may appeal only to a tiny minority, but, for that minority, Al Qaeda's ideological appeals, calls to action and track record are convincing.

In part, the group's success can be traced to its ability to effectively use the tools of the pop culture it rejects. An Al Qaeda recruitment video that circulated widely in the Middle East prior to Sept. 11 demonstrated that the group's propaganda skills reached the "Arab street"--its target audience--more effectively than the Western superpowers or many Arab governments. The video begins with the attack on the U.S.S. Cole. It then moves to a quick-cut montage of aggression against Muslims in Palestine, Jerusalem, Lebanon, Chechnya, Kashmir and Indonesia. Many of the images are from Western news clips that still bear the BBC or CNN logos. The scenes are juxtaposed with images of a scholarly Bin Laden, posing in front of bookshelves or seated on the ground like a religious scholar. Then, putting to rest any thought that this is an organization of wimps, come clips of Al Qaeda military training in Afghanistan, including target practice on a projected image of Bill Clinton.

So, knowing the enemy, how do we devise strategies for managing the risk of living in a world with Al Qaeda? The war against terrorism has already brought short-term abridgements of human rights and political liberties, both domestically and internationally--especially in Central Asia and the Middle East. But these are not long-term solutions to reducing the threat posed by Al Qaeda and like-minded groups and may even be counterproductive.

Addressing underlying issues of poverty, unemployment and global economic imbalances--however desirable--is also not sufficient. Poverty and unemployment do not in themselves breed terrorism. Many of the most dedicated terrorists and advocates of extreme violence are affluent professionals or scions of the middle class. And some members of Al Qaeda's top leadership--including Bin Laden and his Egyptian colleague, medical doctor Ayman Zawahiri--come from the wealthiest stratum of society.

Yet, they have grasped what the U.S. and its allies have not: how to appeal to disaffected elements of the Arab street, an increasingly educated public that today has access to a wide range of uncensored media and information that creates a desire for accountability from governments. In villages and small towns in Egypt and Iraq in the late 1960s, I frequently saw men at coffee shops or seated in circles, with one of the few literates reading aloud to the others. In Morocco in the early 1970s, rural people sometimes asked me to "translate" newscasts from the standard transnational Arabic of the state radio into their colloquial Arabic. Today this is no longer required. Mass education and new communications technologies enable large numbers of Arabs to hear and see Al Qaeda's message directly.

The growth--and challenge--of this new public was widely recognized in U.S. policy circles well before Sept. 11. In testimony before the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence in February 2001, CIA Director George J. Tenet cited the Arab street, in explaining that "the right catalyst--such as the outbreak of Israeli-Palestinian violence--can move people to act. Through access to the Internet and other means of communication, a restive public is increasingly capable of taking action without any identifiable leadership or organizational structure."

Because many governments in the Middle East are deeply suspicious of an open press, nongovernmental organizations and open expression, it is no surprise that the public is increasingly influenced by the often extreme and hard-to-censor “new media.” Leadership can remain anonymous, an advantage in the Middle East, which, in general, has a democracy deficit and a demonstrated propensity for cracking down on critics.

One consequence of this democracy deficit is to magnify the power of the street in the Arab world. Bin Laden speaks in the vivid language of popular Islamic preachers and builds on a deep and widespread resentment against the West and local ruling elites identified with it. The lack of formal outlets to express diverse political opinions makes it easier for terrorists like Bin Laden, who cloaks himself in religion, to hijack some in his audience and motivate a lethal few to action.

We must accept that there will always be ideas available to justify intolerance and violence, and there will also always be ways for terrorists to manipulate open societies for their own nefarious ends. Countering radical ideologies and theologies of violence is not easy. Yet, the very proliferation of voices arguing in open debate about the role of Islam in the modern world and in contemporary society can contribute significantly to defusing terrorist appeals to the street. Public opinion is easier to hijack in the absence of full debate. Without public discussion, ideas are reduced to their simplest and starkest terms. That is why British Prime Minister Tony Blair’s response to Al Qaeda videotaped propaganda on Qatar’s Al Jazeera Satellite TV last October--he immediately asked Al Jazeera for equal time to reply--was more appropriate than the first U.S. response, which was to call for censoring the broadcast of Al Qaeda tapes.

The best long-term way to mitigate the continuing threat of terrorism is to encourage Middle Eastern states to be more responsive to their populations’ demands for participation. Some countries, including some of our allies, see such “open society” activities as subversive--as Egypt demonstrated in May when a security court sentenced civil rights activist Saad Eddin Ibrahim to seven years of hard labor for criticizing the regime and calling into question the fairness of recent elections.

It is no easy job to convince Arab states that it is in their interest to create open societies. But they must recognize that increasing levels of education, greater ease of travel and the rise of new communications media are turning the Arab street into a public sphere in which large numbers of people--and not just a political and economic elite--want a say in governance and public issues. Some countries, like Morocco, have been moving steadily in that direction. The terrorist option has no appeal to Moroccans. They have a greater stake in their society. The example of neighboring Algeria offers Moroccans a harrowing example of the alternative, and the Moroccan street speaks of it often.

There are liberal as well as illiberal voices in the Middle East and multiple contenders for the guardianship and interpretation of Islamic beliefs and values. Giving larger numbers of people a greater stake in decision-making in their societies and the opportunity to express their views will undermine the appeal of the terrorist alternative--and diminish its appeal to the street.

Dale F. Eickelman, a professor of anthropology and human relations at Dartmouth College, is currently at the Oxford Centre for Islamic Studies. He is the author of “The Middle East and Central Asia: An Anthropological Approach.”

#title Family ties

#subtitle The Muhammad Bin Laden Visiting Fellow at the Oxford Centre for Islamic Studies, Professor Dale Eickelman, explains why he is happy that his academic work is associated with the Bin Laden family.

#author Dale F. Eickelman

#date 16 Nov 2001

#source
<[[https://www.theguardian.com/education/2001/nov/16/highereducation.uk][theguardian.com/education/2001/nov/16/highereducation.uk]]>

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#topics

In mid-October I gave my first public talk at Oxford University, where I am currently the Muhammad Bin Ladin Visiting Fellow at Oxford's Centre for Islamic Studies.

Common to such occasions, I provided the person who introduced me with some appropriate biographical details. He mentioned a few of my books and academic details, but left out my current Bin Ladin title. As soon as I rose to speak, I filled in the gap. It was a small episode, but I didn't want to bury the fellowship's name under a rug. Hiding the fellowship's title would imply guilt by association and dishonour the memory of Muhammad bin Ladin, the Saudi construction magnate who died in 1968.

One of his other 52 siblings established the fellowship seven years ago in memory of their father. Far from being complicit in Osama bin Ladin's terrorism, the Bin Ladin family broke with Osama in the early 1990s. In the United States and Britain, we don't hold extended families responsible for the actions of one of their members.

I have never met any member of the Bin Ladin family, nor have I corresponded with them. However, from what has been written about them, many of Osama's brothers and sisters are fluent in English as well as Arabic - hardly surprising since many studied in Europe and the US - and they appear as comfortable in the west as in the east, readily crossing the rapidly dissolving imagined frontiers between the two. The family's donations to furthering Islamic studies in the west, both here at Oxford and at two US institutions, have the same goal. It's one that I share.

At Dartmouth, I'm the Ralph and Richard Lazarus Professor of anthropology and human relations. That means my name is linked with the founder and former CEO of Bloomingdale's. I never met him (although I do correspond occasionally with some members of the Lazarus family), nor have I ever been asked how funds derived from Bloomingdale's influence my work. I do, however, write on changing ideas and practices of religious and political authority in the Muslim world. In fact, the working title of the book I'm completing is optimistically called Inside the Islamic Reformation.

I've been especially concerned with how rising levels of education throughout much of the Muslim world and the proliferation of new media (satellite television, internet, and fax machines) creates new forms of association, challenging conventional patterns of religious and political authority. That topic does cut closer to the Bin Ladin name, and extremism and terror in the name of religion is an integral part of the topic. Unfortunately, we live in a world where extremist acts by a few zealots, in the name of religion or secular causes, can wreak havoc on large numbers of people. However, it's also an opportunity to remind audiences, in person and in print, of some of the basic tenets of responsibility and to avoid stereotyping.

My current location at Oxford - and conversations over the past month with colleagues in Iran, Japan, and the Arab world - offer some perspective on how September 11 influences their teaching. One colleague in an Arab Gulf state teaches a course on the cultural contexts of health and healing. He points out that standard topics, such as child neglect, take on a new meaning. The standard textbooks invoke western examples. He is inspired to look instead at examples from his own society. He writes that even a seemingly neutral topic, such as diseases of development, encourages new questions: Will Arabs continue to invest their capital primarily in the west, or will they finally "limit their capital flight" to more risky under developed economies? In general, however, harder questions emerge in private discussions and not in lecture theatres. In Iran for a small conference on "political Islam" in late October, Iranian academic colleagues pointedly sought to emphasise their distinct academic voice. Their main concern was to rebuild ties with their foreign counterparts, and they pointedly avoided the calls of a few Iranians, none of whom remained for the core of the conference, to speak of nothing

but the current situation in Afghanistan. The conference was planned well before the events of September 11.

I return to regular teaching in the US in January. Courses in Arabic and on Islam and the Middle East are heavily enrolled. My own course, thought and change in the Middle East and Central Asia, will probably see an upsurge in enrolment. I wrote one of the basic texts in the field, a book with a bread and butter title, The Middle East: An Anthropological Approach. The most recent edition, the fourth, just appeared, but no one could have anticipated the events of the September bombings and the war in Afghanistan. For the first time, I'll make heavy use of videos, showing parts of the Bin Ladin "recruitment" video that surfaced last summer, as well as the more recent videos and interviews. I regret to say some of the tapes are well made for their intended audiences. I always stress the complexities and competing voices in the Muslim world. This time around, my audience will not regard Islam as somehow distant and exotic.

#title The Practicality of the Liberal Arts

#author Dale F. Eickelman

#date Spring 2014

#source AUK Chronicle 10th Anniversary Edition, Spring 2014, pp. 18–19. <[[https://auk.edu.kw/getattachment/1e40b7a9-0b1e-455b-ad5c-ae0618613cd1/auk-chronicle-10-year-anniversary-issue][auk.edu.kw/.../auk-chronicle-10-year-anniversary-issue]]>

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There has been unprecedented demand for growth in higher education in all GCC states since the late 20th century, especially in private higher education. This growth has taken many forms, and much of the demand has been for undergraduate education in business, since this is seen as “practical.” There is an equally strong argument for the practicality of the

liberal arts—which can include a business component—as even more adaptable to rapid change in technology and resources in today's world. In some of the diwaniyas in Kuwait, and in some museums, there are photographs of prominent Kuwaitis from the early 1900s and the midtwentieth century. I often wonder how many Kuwaitis of these earlier periods could anticipate the massive and rapid change in technology, entrepreneurial culture, and opportunities and constraints in the world in which we live today.

The sudden growth in higher education is not without precedent elsewhere. During the late 19th and early 20th century in the U.S., both universities and the U.S. economy grew at an unprecedented rate. Leading businessmen supported education, but not necessarily the liberal arts. Andrew Carnegie (1835–1919), born into poverty in Scotland and self-taught—began his career as a telegrapher but later became one of America's leading industrialists, was initially scornful of the liberal arts. In 1891, he praised the learning of "shorthand and typing" as a practical way to earn a living and, like other businessmen, was scornful of the "liberal arts," which he said adapted students only for "life on another planet." Yet, later in life he established free libraries throughout the United States and endowed the Carnegie Endowment; one of the leading international foundations for the advancement of learning and the public good. At its outset, the Endowment was established to facilitate universities to run more like businesses. Others, such as Richard Crane (1858–1939), another leading industrialist, said in 1912 that only those with "useful knowledge" had a right to happiness, he wrote, not those with an impractical "special knowledge of literature, art, languages, or history."

As the first in my family to receive a university education, I recognize later versions of these arguments. I heard them when I first told my parents that I wanted to major in anthropology and not follow a career in business, law, or the military. So what are the liberal arts today? AUK's distinguishing characteristic since it opened its doors ten years ago has been its commitment to the liberal arts. At the core of the liberal arts, is critical thinking (al-fikr al-naqdi). This involves the growing ability to analyze problems, apply knowledge, synthesize and evaluate difficult issues, recognize hidden assumptions, and communicate with others in both local

and global environments. Critical thinking offers the keys to creating, adapting, innovating, and leading.

The liberal arts involve major debates about the goals of higher education. I have already evoked the debates in my country, and they will never end. At one extreme are those who felt that the only useful education is practical and utilitarian. At the other extreme are those who see higher education as a prelude to lifelong learning and an orientation to contribution to the nation, faith, and society— admittedly while not forgetting family and friends. These arguments will never end because each generation faces different challenges, and so does the right balance for the liberal arts.

Since coming to Kuwait for the first time in 1988, I know that there are enthusiastic supporters of the liberal arts, the arts, and creation of a knowledge-based economy in all walks of life. Education in the liberal arts means building a capacity to understand life on this planet, and this training enhances careers in business, technology, government service, education, and many other fields. To take only one example, students at my university sometimes take courses in both art history and computer science. The habits of close observation in both fields reinforce one another, and enable students to learn by practice the value of close observation and often new ways of knowing and visualizing problems and solutions.

The liberal arts do not imply a life lost in abstractions or the nonstop reading of Socrates, Ibn Sina, or Rashid Ridha, but a constant shifting back and forth between detail and practice, history and the present, routine and innovation, and art, science, and the hard surfaces of economy and society. I’ve seen the astonishment at AUK when students present projects in class using photographs from Kuwaiti newspapers from the 1960s. It is as if they were visiting another country, so remote are the images from today’s experience. I’ve also seen AUK students present videos that adapt, in Bollywood style, a Shakespeare play and other classics to Kuwaiti social life, engage successfully in international computer science competitions and, after graduation from AUK, pursue meaningful graduate studies elsewhere.

AUK offers a model of education that extends beyond the classroom to experiential learning, combining knowledge and competencies in many related fields. For Dartmouth, our relationship with AUK has provided a model for a renewed global engagement. The learning is in both directions for students and faculty at both our institutions. For example, a shared videoconference between Dartmouth and AUK students in computer science impressed my Dartmouth counterparts by the numbers of Kuwait-based women in a field that at Dartmouth is dominated by men.

Crucial to knowledge generation and critical thinking is a simultaneous anchor in the local and global. This simultaneity is one reason why no one definition of the liberal arts encompasses everything. It is a form of education defined by scope and approach, not by a particular content. Local cultural knowledge, skills, discernment, good judgment, pride in one’s own society and the ability to live and appreciate others have always been essential components of the liberal arts.

In contemporary universities, the skills of writing and thinking critically and in public, built into education at all levels and in all fields, can jump start the transition to knowledge based societies. AUK prepares its graduates for a lifetime of challenge, adaptation, leadership, and innovation, and to look beyond their first job—even as undergraduates—to realize their highest potential. To achieve this goal, AUK faculty and administrators, like their counterparts elsewhere, aspire to renew their own knowledge and ways of learning—and peer learning is a resource vital to making universities work. The liberal arts are the key to harnessing imagination and ways of knowing to shaping and responding to the world in which we live.

Dale F. Eickelman is Ralph and Richard Lazarus Professor of Anthropology and Human Relations at Dartmouth College. Author of eight books, several of which have been translated into Arabic, and over 150 articles and book chapters, he is a former President of the Middle East Studies Association of North America, Fellow of the Institute for Advanced Study (Princeton), and of the Institute for Advanced Study (Berlin), Professor

Eickelman currently serves as senior advisor to Kuwait’s first private liberal arts university, the American University of Kuwait. In 2011 he received the Distinguished Scholar Award from the Middle East Section of the American Anthropological Association. He is currently also President of the Tangier American Legation Institute for Moroccan Studies (TALIM).

#title Muslim Societies and Politics: Soviet and US Approaches: A Conference Report

#author Dale F. Eickelman and Kamran Pasha

#date Autumn 1991

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#topics

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Following workshops in Moscow and Leningrad in August 1990, Soviet and US scholars who specialize in the study of Muslim societies in the Middle East, South Asia, and Soviet Central Asia held a conference in Hanover, New Hampshire, and Washington, DC, in April 1991 to share the results of their research, to assess the strengths of their respective approaches to

understanding political and religious developments in the Muslim world, and to explore future collaborative projects, including field research in Soviet Central Asia.[1] The project brought together scholars from anthropology, political science, history, and religion, with Soviet and US scholars being paired by topical and regional interests.[2]

One observer at the conference noted, “Many parts of the Islamic world, especially the Middle East, have been of enormous strategic importance to both the Soviet Union and the United States in the 20th century. But until recently, Soviet and American scholars of Islam have had virtually no contact and opportunity to benefit from one another’s understanding of Islamic religion and politics.”[3]

The project was one of the first beneficiaries of the changes that glasnost has brought to the working conditions of Soviet academics. In 1990, they were granted greater control over the dissemination of their scholarship, allowing for more open, uncensored exchanges with foreign scholars. As a result, Soviet and US scholars now have the opportunity and incentive to work together and to evaluate their respective approaches to understanding Muslim and Middle Eastern societies.

*** The Other “Orientalist” Crisis

For Western scholars and their public, studies such as Edward Said’s Orientalism heightened awareness of the subtle linkages between the dominant organizational frameworks of scholarly perceptions and the social and political contexts in which they are produced.[4] The collapse of state authority in Lebanon and the Iranian Revolution brought home to Western policymakers, and to the general public, the weaknesses of conventional organizational frameworks for understanding the Middle East and Muslim societies. These had been based on “modernization” theories of the 1950s and 1960s, which assumed that religious belief and practice would become privatized and recede from public political life.[5] The events of the Iranian Revolution pointed up an urgent need to understand Muslim social

and political movements and how they contribute to redefining boundaries of sect, language, ethnicity, and nation.

The Soviet “orientalist” crisis occurred in relative isolation from Western scholarly debate. Conventional Soviet frameworks for analyzing political, social, and economic processes had no more success than their Western counterparts in explaining the Islamic revolution in Iran and the rise of Islamic political activism and other religious movements as forces in world politics.

Yevgeny Primakov, formerly director of the 800-member Institute of Oriental Studies (IVAN), sought to reconcile Soviet social science theory with the new Muslim politics of the 1980s in the Middle East. He initially tried to reconceptualize the social and political aspects of religion within the framework of Marxist-Leninist theories of development. The analyses of IVAN scholars eventually persuaded Primakov, however, that the Soviet view of the inevitability of “progressive” Marxist revolutions in the “foreign Muslim East” was wrong. He, in turn, helped convince Soviet president Mikhail Gorbachev to abandon Moscow’s strategy of aiding “revolutionary” regimes in the Middle East. Primakov left IVAN in the late 1980s to become a Politburo member, leaving to others the task of filling the conceptual void that Gorbachev’s “new thinking” had produced.[6]

In 1989, the study of Islam within the boundaries of the Soviet Union was added to IVAN’s responsibilities and removed from state organizations concerned primarily with anti-religious propaganda. As Mikhail Piotrovsky of the Hermitage, Leningrad, commented at the 1990 Moscow workshop, “Twenty years ago we considered religious beliefs to be dying. Now we are reaping the harvest of this neglect.” According to Vitaly Naumkin of IVAN, the Soviet Union now has the fifth largest Muslim population of any country in the world—55 million, with 500,000 in Moscow—and the concerns of these people in many ways parallel those of Muslims elsewhere.

Recent political developments within the Soviet Union, including explicitly acknowledged linkages between Islam and national consciousness in Azerbaijan and the Central Asian republics, provide added urgency to the

Soviet need to understand Muslim politics. This was made clear to Soviet policymakers and the public by “external” developments—events in Iran and Afghanistan. Now it involves an “internal” challenge, inexplicable by conventional Soviet analysis because the relative isolation of Soviet scholars has hindered their efforts to identify and apply non-Marxist social theories and conceptual frameworks. This makes collaborative ventures especially attractive. The Soviets offer to Western scholarship more than a century and a half of study of Muslim societies. They possess a strong tradition of analysis of classical Muslim texts and a commitment to the mastery of “Eastern” languages that is often superior to Western training. Moreover, Soviet studies of Muslim societies have not been compartmentalized by “area” studies as has US scholarship. Soviets have always viewed the “foreign Muslim East” as a whole and not as a collection of regional subspecialties. US scholarly efforts to think of the Muslim world in its entirety, as Muslims do, are still the exception.[7]

*** The Cold War and Perceptions of Middle Eastern Societies

Georgy Kornienko, retired first deputy foreign minister of the Soviet Union, and Richard Cottam of the University of Pittsburgh were remarkably parallel in their assessment of the damaging effects of the Cold War. Kornienko argued that because of ideological dogmatism, both the Soviet Union and the United States often misunderstood one another’s actual intentions. The United States viewed Soviet expansionism, especially in the Middle East, as the main threat to its security. He acknowledged that the Soviet Union did, of course, have national security and economic concerns in the Middle East, but he argued that Soviet policy was motivated also by ideological interests.

“The most evident and tragic example of over-ideologization of Soviet policy,” Kornienko said, was Soviet involvement in Afghanistan. After April 1978, Soviet Communist Party ideologues began to regard Afghanistan as another socialist state. This ideological stance inspired Soviet efforts to introduce its own model of socialism into Afghanistan, which culminated in the dispatch of Soviet troops in December 1979. The United States had been attempting to cultivate a pro-Western stance in Afghanistan during the 1970s, Kornienko noted, but this in itself would not have warranted Soviet intervention without the strength of ideological appeal. “The price which

Soviet society had to pay for this adventure, largely if not wholly caused by ideological misperceptions, is well known," he added.

Cottam said that prior to Stalin's death in 1953 there was evidence to justify the stereotypical views held by US policymakers regarding Soviet expansionist intentions. Although these assumptions grew increasingly unrealistic in subsequent years, like all stereotypes they were unfalsifiable, so contrary evidence was largely ignored. To counter the Soviet presence in the Middle East, Cottam argued, the United States increasingly interfered in the affairs of the region and sought to neutralize the Soviets' effect through proxies. US objectives were to contain the Soviet Union, to insure the free flow of oil, and to guarantee the security of Israel. In accomplishing these objectives, the United States mainly dealt with secular nationalist movements, although Islamic movements were also beginning to emerge in the 1950s. In Iran and the Arab world, nationalists such as Muhammad Mossadegh and Gamal Abd al-Nasir came to power. Such leaders could be counted on to oppose Soviet imperialism, but their support of policies nationalizing resources, their enmity toward Israel, and their anti-imperialist attitudes were seen as a threat to Western interests. These factors led to several crucial foreign policy decisions, including the 1953 US Central Intelligence Agency-supported coup in Iran.[8]

To the surprise of the United States, the Soviet Union, which shared a 1,200-mile border with Iran, took no action after Mossadegh's fall. Cottam said that "Had the Soviets supported the overthrow of a government in Mexico, [the US] response would have been swift and uncompromising." Subsequent key events, such as the Soviet refusal to resupply Iraqi president Saddam Hussein with ammunition to suppress the 1974 Kurdish rebellion, at a time when he was considered to be a Soviet client, did not alter US perceptions of Soviet intentions. The overthrow of Mossadegh shattered the image of the United States in the

Middle East as a supporter of democracy and national self-determination. Similarly, the United States began to view Nasir, who initially had been granted US security assistance and economic support, as a Soviet surrogate and attempted to isolate him.

James Bill of the College of William and Mary remarked that the United States continues to underestimate the force of regional, ethnic, and national loyalties in Middle East politics. He contended that “the final chapter has yet to be written in the Gulf war. Americans who believe that the Gulf war has ended mistake force and coercion for power and influence. We must learn to project ideas as effectively as military force. The United States should have learned that coercion inevitably leads to a loss of influence, as was the case in Iran and Lebanon.”

*** Scholarly and Popular Representations of Islam: Past and Present

At the 1990 Moscow workshop, Mikhail Piotrovsky described the role of Soviet classical historians, such as himself, as preserving the prerevolutionary tradition of Orientalist scholarship, independent from ideological fashions and policy concerns. “Since the 1930s,” he said, “we have practiced Islamic studies in taqiyya [concealment]. In writing about Islam, we had to attack it. In a general book on the Myths of World Peoples, I had to fight to capitalize Allah.” Having been liberated from Bolshevik taboos, Piotrovsky pointed out with irony, “we now face Muslim ones.” Maria Vidiassova of Moscow State University concurred with Piotrovsky that Soviet studies of Islam had been shackled for decades by the political rhetoric that communism would replace religion as “the human direction.”

Piotrovsky’s 1991 conference paper, delivered in absentia, described Islamic political authority as oscillating between sacred authority based on “direct contact with God’s will,” as in Shi’i representations of the caliphal authority, and secular rule based on a ruler’s “contract” with the community of believers, as in Sunni views of the caliphate. Although this distinction has become blurred over time, Piotrovsky said that “it continues today and should be recognized as the starting point for the analysis of political movements in the Muslim world.”

In assessing Western approaches to the study of Islam, Kevin Reinhart of Dartmouth College drew attention to the spread of “cosmopolitan” variants of Islam, advanced in modern times through improved communication and the media, which increased the interaction of Muslims worldwide. Islamic texts and doctrines have always been translocal, he argued, and religion can be regarded as a kind of language. Consequently, variants of Islam can be mapped, much as we map dialects of languages. This allows Muslims to argue over what Islam “really” is. In such an analogy, the Quran, Sunna (Prophetic tradition), and Hadith (sayings of the Prophet) are like phonemes, invoked iconically and subject to interpretation and explanation.

Clifford Geertz of the Institute of Advanced Study, Princeton, noted that both Piotrovsky and Reinhart treat Islam as a system of ideas and principles which are applied in different historical and political settings. Geertz distinguished between “top-down” and “bottom-up” approaches to studying Islam. The top-down approach begins with the highest level of organization and analyzes how this general level controls or shapes the lower ones. Islam, whether seen in a political or religious sense, is viewed as a comprehensive societal formula discerned from authoritative texts and practices, and the expression of these ideas and practices is made at a local level. Thus for Piotrovsky, the Sunni and Shi’i traditions of the caliphate represent Islam as an ideal structural whole. Reinhart’s analysis of dominant religious texts and traditions (Islam), in contrast to localized interpretations and practices (“islams”), is another example. The bottom-up approach analyzes local practices and how they interact to support an overarching Islamic structure. The question is not whether there is an “Islam” or “islams” or a changing balance between alternative notions of power; both approaches have their uses. Rather, Islam is a broad field of differences within which Muslims debate and act upon what they believe Islam to be.

John Esposito of the College of the Holy Cross commented that a fundamental problem in studying Islam lies in overcoming stereotypical approaches. “Western scholars tend to think like traditional mullahs about Islam in the modem world.” “Islam,” he asserted, “is no more incompatible with democracy than are Judaism and Christianity.” The Iranian Revolution stimulated interest in Islamic studies, but few observers paid attention to the “modern” ideas that accompanied the revolution—for example, the country’s new constitution. Westerners who uncritically dismiss religion as a political

force are often shocked to learn the extent of support for Islamic activism among the educated elite.

Several participants noted the shortcomings of assuming a set political theory of the Islamic state. For example, Muhammad Khalid Masud of the Islamic Research Institute in Pakistan noted that there is no a priori definition of the Islamic state, despite the claims of some Islamic activists. “Laws relating to state formation are spelled out neither in the Quran, nor in Sunna, nor in fiqh [jurisprudence],” he explained, but are later inventions which scholars have sought to justify through Quranic or other precedents. Regarding the relationship between secular and Islamic law, Masud pointed out, the ulama had traditionally compromised with temporal rulers and granted them control over certain aspects of public law.

Cornell Fleischer of Washington University, St. Louis, noted that if normative standards of Muslim conduct were applied to the Ottoman Empire at its peak, in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, then there would have been no Muslims. He invoked this example to indicate how politicized contemporary activists have become in considering past periods as normative ones. Fleischer stated that stereotypes about politics in the Muslim world pervade public and policymaking perceptions. The superficial television coverage of the Gulf War, for example, reinforced negative public perceptions of Islam. Many US citizens believe that Muslims cannot be dealt with rationally, so military action is needed to protect US “interests.” Similarly, the complex meanings of jihad are understood by these Americans only in the negative and destructive sense of “holy war,” while “crusade” carries more positive connotations, as in “crusades” against poverty and hunger.

*** Islam in Central Asia

Martha Olcott of Colgate University argued that the Soviet Union’s current state of flux makes it hard to analyze national and religious identities in Soviet Central Asia. Although the current academic openness inside the Soviet Union allows for more freedom in studying the region, Olcott believes there is little assurance that the information garnered represents overall

trends in Central Asian society. Political actors in the region are striving to keep their options open, and there is a three-pronged power struggle among members of the traditional ruling elite, secular modernists, and Islamic activists. According to Olcott, “the future of Central Asia is going to be played out in the balance of power among these groups.” Invoking Benedict Anderson’s notion of “imagined communities” to describe the active construction of political identities now taking place there, she added that boundaries in Central Asia are now more “a state of mind” than geographically defined.[9]

Central Asia’s ruling elite has been in power since the end of the political purges of the 1930s and controls, Olcott said, “strong family-based patronage networks which dominate the Party, the government, and the official and the black-market economies.” The current political elite believes that it can establish legitimacy outside the umbrella of the Communist Party. Many Uzbek officials, for example, privately admit that their ultimate goal is independence. They are currently trying to insure that, when they achieve this goal, Central Asia will have sufficient resources to create a viable political system. A major problem they face, however, is how to create an independent confederation.

One alternative lies with those Muslim movements within the region that call for the creation of an Islamic state in Central Asia. The current official Islamic establishment, which works with the Communist Party, will have trouble maintaining control indefinitely because it is tainted by its cooperation with the Moscow regime. The next several years will see the rise of Islamic political groups independent of the establishment. Olcott believes that “these groups ultimately hold the key cards in Central Asia.” Nationalism and Islam both have mass appeal, and new groups will fuse, creating a volatile situation in the region. Rising Islamic consciousness will result in increased tensions between Russian residents and their indigenous neighbors. Olcott concluded that the traditional elite will continue to play a leading role for the immediate future, but that its power will be increasingly diminished because of opposition from both secular and Islamic groups. These two groups will eventually bring down the traditional elite but will eventually also confront each other.

Alexandr Lukoianov of IVAN acknowledged that the Soviet study of Islam in Central Asia has been traditionally distorted by state ideology. “Muslim societies of the USSR were for a long time viewed as separate from the rest of the Muslim world,” he noted, but the worsening social situation in the Soviet Union makes developments in Central Asia resemble more closely those of the rest of the Muslim world.

Although Soviet scholarship has broken several ideological barriers to the study of Islam in the region, it still faces the isolationist attitude of Central Asian Muslims towards non-believer scholars. These barriers can only be overcome, Lukoianov said, through personal contact with the Islamic community’s official and unofficial leaders. The secular ruling elite, however, has traditionally cooperated with the central authority in attempting to stifle religious activism in the region. Of the 54 “houses of atheistic propaganda” in the Soviet Union, 35 were in Central Asia, but they were generally ineffective. Lukoianov claimed that the region’s isolation from the rest of the Muslim world and official attitudes have prevented the development of serious regional Muslim scholarship, so religious training is often passed on informally by “half-educated mullahs.”

Islam has always existed in several forms in Soviet Central Asia, Lukoianov continued. “Official Islam” is represented by religious leaders backed by the Soviet government, thus denying Muslim political activists the right to exist outside the Soviet state system. These “official” leaders are generally backed by “informal mullahs,” who perform Islamic birth, marriage, and burial rituals but work without official sanction. Islamic activists have recently begun to challenge both these forms of religious leadership. In Central Asia they are concerned primarily with promoting “accurate” religious education and political activism. Social development there has not kept up with population growth, creating a depressed socioeconomic climate ripe for the politicization of Islam.

Originating several years ago as illegal private groups composed mainly of urban youth whose purpose was to study the Quran and Islamic history, such groups found themselves at odds with the official religious establishment. They began to construct and renovate mosques, calling for a “purification” of establishment Islam. Unlike the official establishment, however, they

admitted women into mosques. Although these groups call for more political involvement, for the time being, religious education remains their primary concern.

Lukoianov also described a new development: the founding in spring 1990 of the Ail Union Party of Islamic Revival. The party is officially registered in Moscow, and by the beginning of 1991 it had nearly 10,000 members. It has branches in Uzbekistan and Tajikistan and party cells in Kirghizia and Turkmenia. Efforts by the Central Asian establishment to ban the party only increased its popularity, nearly trebling its membership. The All Union Party, he explained, considers religious education and the spread of “true” Islam as its main objective, along with the struggle against atheistic propaganda and oppression. Party members consider themselves “fundamentalists” because they wish to protect and spread the pillars of the faith as well as the Quran and the Sunna. Although the All Union Party supports Islamic renewal, it does not support the creation of an Islamic state independent from the Soviet Union. Lukoianov considered the Islamic movement in Soviet Central Asia a positive development because it seeks to bring more “enlightened” Islam to the masses through the elimination of “traditional ideology,” which has stood in the way of “normal social development.”

Irina Zviagelskaia of IVAN cautioned against hasty conclusions about future developments in Central Asia. The upsurge in Islamic activism, she argued, is really a search for self-identity and a product of Gorbachev’s reforms. The resurgence of interest in Islam is partly due to a cultural renaissance but also to the desire to identify with and receive economic assistance from rich Muslim nations. She cautioned that scholars should not underestimate the influence of decades of Soviet rule. Islamic “fundamentalism” is now rising to fill a vacuum in Central Asian leadership, and a negative reaction by the central government toward these groups will result in an anti-Soviet backlash.

Khalid Masud noted the importance of transnational Islamic movements in Central Asia, calling attention to an international Islamic conference held in Tashkent in September 1990. At the meeting, an agreement was signed with the International Islamic University in Islamabad to facilitate publications, the training of students and teachers, and academic exchanges. Masud pointed

out that the power of the “USSR Muslims Religious Board for Central Asia” to select exchange candidates serves to enhance its authority in the struggle among competing groups.

Fleischer noted that the short “expeditions” to Soviet Central Asia, consisting primarily of outsiders, and the questions of interest to authorities in Moscow resembled inquiries by Ottoman officials in an earlier era. Jon Anderson of Catholic University observed that the discourse and practice of national and religious identities had become “multiple and polycentric,” making it impossible to define them by their relation to a single political center. Sergei Kan of Dartmouth College commented on how little was known of the experience and practice of Islam in local settings. The Soviet state had systematically destroyed the high-level Islamic leadership, so it was unrealistic to inquire about Islam among the elite. Kan was interested in seeing more analysis of the effects of Soviet secularization on the educated elite: How, for example, does an “authorized” communist religious leader differ from an Iranian one? Several participants noted the importance of discerning changing religious beliefs among educated youth.

When Lukoianov added that the lack of formal organization of most Islamic groups currently precludes their playing more active political roles, several participants pointed out that US scholars and diplomats had made similar appraisals of Islamic activist movements in Iran up to the last days of the Pahlavi dynasty. Indeed, the very lack of a discernible formal organization among Muslim activists in Central Asia protects them from control and manipulation by state authorities. It is thus not surprising that the only officially recognized group denies any explicit political objectives. Could it be officially sanctioned and do otherwise?

James Bill, commenting on the situation in Tajikistan, said he foresees considerable instability in the region’s future. Underlying the unrest are social and economic grievances against Moscow. Six hundred thousand unemployed Tajiks have no real political outlet except street demonstrations, and to those who wonder why these movements are not visible, Bill compared the situation to volcanic magma. “Populist Islam is always active,” he explained. “When the pressure is unchecked, it eventually blows away the

pinnacle of formal authority. One must take this magma of social movements into account before they burst to the surface."

Contemporary political movements in Tajikistan require several levels of analysis, Naumkin responded, although he cautioned that "we in Moscow still don't fully understand what is happening in Central Asia." Ethnic identity is the first level of understanding, but the idea of a unified Tajik nation is still in flux because there are several separate identities.[10] The second level of identification is regional. Many Tajik intellectuals feel culturally linked to Iran and Afghanistan, while others seek to create an overarching Central Asian identity. They are, however, pulled between "pure Tajik nationalism" and "Islamic movements which hold that all Muslims belong to one community." A third level is that of more localized cultural identities, most of which remain underground.

Tajik identity is not easily definable, Naumkin said, because Tajiks are more divided between northern and southern communities than between communist and opposition movements. Northern hegemony in employment and political offices has often led to intra-Tajik conflict, which is aggravated by linguistic and cultural differences. Even Muslim activists are divided between anti-nationalist and nationalist groups. These local divisions and differences will play a major role in the future of Tajikistan.

*** Afghanistan and Iran

Gene Garthwaite of Dartmouth College cautioned against viewing tribe and state as self-contained systems; they have been interdependent throughout the history of both Afghanistan and Iran. In Iran, tribes cannot be defined, as some administrators have sought to do, as "permanent collective groups with fixed memberships and territories." Tribes in Iran were formed through political affiliations to local-level groups which were organized on principles of kinship, marriage, residence, economics, and political associations. On the other hand, he noted, the state can be defined as "a political entity characterized by territorial borders (even if vague), bureaucratic differentiation, some success at monopolizing physical coercion, and some degree of legitimacy in extracting resources through duties and taxes,

maintenance of order, regulation of goods and services, and rule over a socioeconomically stratified population.”

According to Garthwaite, two periods of tribe-state relations can be differentiated historically: that of the pre-Pahlavi period prior to 1925 and that of the modem state in the Pahlavi and post-Pahlavi period. Through physical coercion and manipulation, Reza Shah set about creating a state in which local identities would be eclipsed and absorbed. This is in contrast to the previous Qajar dynasty when loyalty was first to Islam and second to the monarchy, on condition that the monarch defended and upheld the faith.

Garthwaite explained that Reza Shah viewed the tribes as a threat to the unity and order of the centralized state, which was based ideologically on secular nationalism and Iranian identity. The 1979 Iranian Revolution and the formation of the Islamic republic “changed the essential ideology and symbols of the state, but not its form.” There is little room for tribal identity in postrevolutionary Iran, because the clergy are suspicious of tribal adherence to Shi’i norms. “The marginalization of tribes which began under the Pahlavis has been carried, perhaps permanently, into the new post-Pahlavi state.”

Viktor Korgun of IVAN viewed the history of Afghanistan over the past two centuries as being characterized by a delicate balance among the state, tribes, and Islam. In the late 1950s, social reforms that threatened the traditional interests of the religious establishment led to a “re-politicization” of Islam. The 1975 rebellion, largely a protest against the regime’s secular nature, was crushed, but the April 1978 coup upset a painstakingly recreated balance between Muslim leaders and the state.[11] The new socialist regime wanted to destroy what they believed was an obsolete political and social system within Afghanistan. It originally sought to disguise its motives, however, as a defense of “Islamic principles and democracy.”

This secular, even atheist, regime, Korgun contended, was motivated less by enmity toward Islam than by a lack of understanding of the important role Islam plays in modern Afghan society. By 1979, this negative approach had precipitated an “ideological conflict” between Islamic forces and the state.

Wide-scale repression of Islamic activists led to an erosion of support for the revolutionary regime that economic and social reforms could not offset. The dispatch of Soviet troops to Afghanistan in 1979 convinced the populace that the regime had betrayed Muslims to an aggressive atheist superpower.

David Edwards of Williams College questioned some aspects of Korgun's presentation. According to Edwards, in his analysis of the failed April 1978 "revolution," Korgun seemed to absolve Soviet policymakers of responsibility for the decision to enter Afghanistan. He attributed the ensuing disaster to Afghan incompetence. Yet, by attributing the failure of the 1978 revolutionary government solely to overambitious goals, he seemed to absolve Afghan leaders of responsibility for the political chaos they initiated. Edwards also questioned how the "fragile balance" among tribe, state, and Islam was able to hold together for centuries only to collapse over a period of 10 years. He suggested considering "state," "tribe," and "Islam" not as separate entities but as interdependent, changing, contextually variable concepts, as Garthwaite had done in his analysis of Iran. Like Garthwaite, Edwards suggested focusing more intensively on political activities among the generation of prerevolutionary university students in Kabul, whose ideas and loyalties later became polarized into "Marxist" and "Muslim" factions in the post-1978 conflict.

Robert Canfield of Washington University, St. Louis, affirmed the need to define tribe and state contextually. He also suggested distinguishing between national minorities, like the Kurds, and tribes. "National minorities are those communities which spill out into other states, while tribes remain within the political boundaries of the state and do not seek autonomy from it. Because of their sense of oppression, national minority groups within a multi-state system may become more vocal for independence or autonomy." Tribes, as such, are not a threat to the state in Afghanistan, but social and religious identities are. Such identities are not static, Canfield concluded, but change as political awareness becomes transformed.

*** Islamization in Pakistan

Richard Kurin of the Smithsonian Institution and Dimitri Novossyolov of IVAN highlighted different approaches to understanding Islamization in Pakistan. Kurin, as an anthropologist, had engaged in field research, but Novossyolov, while recognizing the merits of such an approach, had been unable to pursue such study. Despite his fluent Urdu, Soviet regulations prevailing at the time of his residence in Pakistan in the early 1980s prohibited him from "unauthorized" contact with Pakistanis.

Kurin assessed Islamization as it affected the lives of two Pakistanis: one a sayyid, a descendant of the Prophet, and a religious teacher who lived in a Punjabi village; the other, a former classical dancer in Karachi. He argued that Islam is not the only source for personal and collective identity, even in overwhelmingly Muslim countries, and that much Islamic tradition is appropriated from nonMuslim sources. "Muslims in Pakistan," he contended, "are not merely passive recipients of attempts to define and institute an Islamic order." Islamization empowered some institutions and ideas and lessened the dominance of others.

The sayyid, a member of an old and respected Punjabi family, is a farmer, a practitioner of traditional medicine, and a preacher. Prior to Muhammad Zia ul-Haq's Islamization program, the sayyid saw his role as helping villagers become better Muslims by setting an example. The government's program was important in that he no longer seemed to be a lone voice calling for reform.

Kurin's second case, a dancer turned middle-aged housewife and mother, had migrated from India to Karachi following the partition of India. She and her family enjoyed successful dancing careers, undertaking international tours and receiving awards from the Pakistani government during the 1970s. The dancer reacted to Islamization by criticizing the building of mosques when hospitals, schools, and orphanages were needed. As a result, some of her neighbors derided her career as un-Islamic, causing her personal grief because she strongly identified herself as a faithful Muslim; she considered her dancing an expression of mental and physical discipline. Islamization prompted her family gradually to change the way they lived. Daily prayer and Quran reading became common in the household, and by 1980 she had ended her dance career and given up her desire to start a dance school.

Novossyolov sought to understand Islamization in Pakistan through an analysis of the zakat. Islamization was partly the result of Zia's own piety and partly intended to broaden the social base of support for the military regime. Interest-free banking and zakat were important pillars of this program. The zakat collection and distribution system involved the government's annual compulsory withdrawal of 2.5 percent of savings from all bank accounts on the first day of Ramadan. Distribution was overseen by the national Central Zakat Committee that worked in coordination with provincial and local committees to determine who received aid. In July 1988, there were more than 36,000 zakat committees and more than 250,000 individuals participating in the administration of the tax.

Novossyolov saw many problems with the zakat system. One was that only individuals could be recipients. Another was that the accounts of zakat committees, often maintained by illiterate and untrained individuals, went unaudited for years, thus encouraging corruption. The system was also politicized. Zakat committees, according to Novossyolov, became an instrument of political mobilization, as was seen in their pro-Zia propaganda efforts in 1984. Similarly, the reestablishment of the Muslim League in 1986 was aided by zakat committees. In the 1988 and 1990 election campaigns, opposing parties used zakat committees as springboards for votes. Benazir Bhutto's government attempted to federalize the zakat system to prevent opposing parties from utilizing local committees as political weapons, but the dismissal of her government in August 1990 prevented further changes in the system. To strengthen provincial control over zakat funds, however, the Mian Nawaz Sharif government established the Bayt al-Mal, an Islamic house of charity. Unfortunately, Novossyolov said, it has proven to be more efficient at propaganda than at charity.

Islamization, Khalid Masud noted, can be viewed from several perspectives. It can be seen as the integral control of religious institutions by the government or as control of political and economic structures by the ulama. It can also be viewed as the implementation of sharia, but without a resolution of the question of the nature and interpretation of sharia. In addition, Islamization can be defined as a form of opposition to both capitalism and socialism or merely as social reform. Both Kurin and

Novossyolov focused on specific points that need to be considered in understanding the wider process of Islamization in Pakistan. Both recognized that socioeconomic structures had been little changed by Islamization in Pakistan and that the influence of the political-military elite remained strong.

Esposito commented on the irony that the first stage of Islamization in Pakistan, as elsewhere, had been repressive—taxes and punishments and no democratization. Some Pakistanis have pointed to the incompatibility of Islamization and martial law; others have argued that Islamization needs to be pursued more vigorously. Edwards noted the complementarity of Kurin's and Novossyolov's positions: one shows the consequences of state-wide transformations on individuals, the other focuses on how bureaucratic decisions and structures are articulated with society-wide processes.

*** Conclusion

Robert McC. Adams, secretary of the Smithsonian Institution, commented on the importance of specialized knowledge in developing effective foreign policy options. Scholars concerned with the Middle East, he said, have become marginal in US policy circles. Soviet participants commented that their experience has been the same. Given these circumstances, Adams urged scholars to play a larger role in making their knowledge available to a wider public.

Masud commented that until recently ignorance of Islam was a problem in Europe and North America. Now this has been replaced by a fear of Islam. Masud and others also commented on differences between Soviet and US approaches to understanding Islam. In interpreting specific political developments, however, the approaches of Soviet and US contributors were often indistinguishable. Moreover, there was considerable internal diversity in both scholarly communities.

Naumkin commented on the value of field research in investigating issues as diverse as Islamization in Pakistan and the structure of the Palestinian intifada. Many of the decisions affecting the Palestinian uprising

are not made by recognized formal leaders but by anonymous “street” leaders. The same can be said for the emerging leadership in Central Asia. These “underground” movements have not been adequately studied by scholars. He also cautioned against the tendency to dismiss Islamic activists as “fanatics”: “These are people who carefully calculate their political steps and we should deal with them on this basis.”

One major difference between the US and Soviet participants was in the theoretical assumptions and organizational frameworks for interpreting political and religious movements. US participants were aware of the theoretical assumptions implicit in their analyses of topics as diverse as foreign policy and ethnic, national, and religious identities. Soviet participants for the most part viewed “theory” with skepticism, in part because of the term’s link to Marxist doctrine. One participant commented that Soviet problems were too “real” to be concerned with “theory” and “speculation.” Others, however, felt that learning Western concepts and techniques for analyzing ethnic, national, and religious identities offered a sounder base for approaching these issues than did the existing Soviet ones.

*** Appendix: Conference Papers

DARTMOUTH COLLEGE SESSIONS

Session 1: Traditions of Scholarly Inquiry

Mikhail B. Piotrovsky, The Hermitage, Leningrad

“Islam Political: Can the Past Predict the Future?”

Maria F. Vidiassova, Moscow State University

“Ibn Khaldoun and Islamic History”

A. Kevin Reinhart, Dartmouth College

“The Limits of Expertise”

Discussants: John Esposito, College of the Holy Cross

Clifford Geertz, Institute for Advanced Study, Princeton

Session 2: Soviet Central Asia

Martha B. Olcott, Colgate University

“Imagining Politics: National Identity and Political Stability in Soviet Central Asia”

Alexandr K. Lukoianov, Institute of Oriental Studies, Moscow

“The Study of Islam in Soviet Central Asia”

Discussants: Irina Zviagelskaia, Institute of Oriental Studies, Moscow

Karen I. Blu, New York University Sergei Kan, Dartmouth College

Session 3: Iran and Afghanistan

Viktor G. Korgun, Institute of Oriental Studies, Moscow “A Failed Revolution? State, Islam, and Tribe in Afghanistan”

Gene R. Garthwaite, Dartmouth College

“Tribe and Nationalism in Iran: Kurds and Bakhtiyari”

Discussants: David B. Edwards, Williams College

Vyacheslav Ya. Belokrenitsky, Institute of Oriental Studies, Moscow Robert Canfield, Washington University, St. Louis

Session 4: Arabs in Israel and the Occupied Territories

Dimitri V. Makarov, Institute of Oriental Studies, Moscow

“Arab Nationalist and Religious Movements in Israel and the Occupied Territories: A Soviet Dissertation Research Proposal”

Discussants: Ian S. Lustick, Dartmouth College

Vitaly V. Naumkin, Institute of Oriental Studies, Moscow

Session 5: Islamic States

Cornell H. Fleischer, Washington University, St. Louis

“Ottoman State, Islamic State”

Vyacheslav Ya. Belokrenitsky, Institute of Oriental Studies, Moscow

“Islam and the State in Pakistan”

Discussants: Clifford Geertz, Institute for Advanced Study, Princeton

Muhammad Khalid Masud, Islamic Research Institute, Islamabad

Session 6: Pakistan

Richard Kurin, Smithsonian Institution

“Islamization in Pakistan: The Sayyid and the Dancer”

Dimitri B. Novossyolov, Institute of Oriental Studies, Moscow

“The Islamization of Welfare in Pakistan”

Discussants: Muhammad Khalid Masud, Islamic Research Institute, Islamabad Vitaly V. Naumkin, Institute of Oriental Studies, Moscow John Esposito, College of the Holy Cross

Session 7: Round Table

“The Gulf Crisis”

SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION SESSIONS

Session 8: The Arabian Peninsula

Dale F. Eickelman, Dartmouth College

“Religion, Nation, and State in the Arabian Peninsula: The Imagination of Local and Collective Identities”

Vitaly V. Naumkin, Institute of Oriental Studies, Moscow

“Tribe, Family, and State in Mahra and Socotra: Traditional Identities in a Changing World”

Discussants: Jill Crystal, University of Michigan

Norman Cigar, US Department of the Army

Session 9: The Great Powers and the Middle East

Georgy M. Kornienko, Institute of Oriental Studies, Moscow

“Soviet Policy in the Middle East: A Practitioner’s Interpretation”

Richard W. Cottam, University of Pittsburgh

“US Policy and the Cold War in the Middle East: The Assumptions, the Impact, and the Lessons Learned”

Discussants: Irina Zviagelskaia, Institute of Oriental Studies, Moscow Shaul Bakhash, George Mason University James A. Bill, College of William and Mary

Session 10: Muslims in Multi-National, Multi-Ethnic States

James A. Bill, College of William and Mary

“Religion and Politics in Central Asia: Tajikistan”

Yvonne Y. Haddad, University of Massachusetts, Amherst

“The Challenge of Muslim ‘Minorityness’: The American Experience”

Discussants: Martha B. Olcott, Colgate University

Jon W. Anderson, Catholic University

Alexandr K. Lukoianov, Institute of Oriental Studies, Moscow

Muhammad Khalid Masud, Islamic Research Institute, Pakistan

Session 11: Round Table

“Policy and Scholarship in the Study of Muslim Societies”

[1] The workshops in Moscow and Leningrad, held August 21–31, 1990, were funded by the Soviet Academy of Sciences, the Rockefeller Center for the Social Sciences at Dartmouth College, and the International Research and Exchange Board. The conference, “Other Orients: Soviet and American Perspectives on Muslim and Middle Eastern Societies and Politics,” was held in Hanover, New Hampshire, April 4–8, 1991, and Washington, DC, April 10–11, 1991. It was sponsored by Dartmouth College and the Smithsonian Institution, and supported by grants from the US National Endowment for the Humanities, the Rockefeller Center for the Social Sciences at Dartmouth College, the John Sloan Dickey Endowment for International Understanding and the Howland H. Sargeant Fund at Dartmouth College, the Smithsonian Institution, the Soviet Academy of Sciences, and the Soros Foundation—Moscow.

[2] See appendix for papers presented and participant affiliation.

[3] Ellen K. Coughlin, “In Landmark Effort, Soviet and American Scholars Share Fruits of Research on Muslim Countries,” Chronicle of Higher Education, April 17, 1991, pp. A5, A13.

[4] Edward W. Said, Orientalism (New York: Random House, 1978).

[5] Leonard Binder, “The Natural History of Development Theory,” Comparative Studies in Society and History, vol. 28, no. 1 (January 1986). Binder’s article was provided to Soviet colleagues prior to the 1990 Moscow workshop as one of several readings representing current issues in US scholarship.

[6] Martha Brill Olcott, “Islam and Ideology: IVAN’s Political Agenda,” Report to the National Council on Soviet and Eastern European Research, Revised Version, May 1989.

[7] See, for example, Robert L. Canfield, “Introduction,” in Robert L. Canfield, ed., Turco-Persia in Historical Perspective (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991), pp. 1–34.

[8] For an example of US intervention in the Arab world, see Douglas Little, “Cold War and Covert Action: The United States and Syria, 1945—1958,” Middle East Journal, vol. 44, no. 1 (Winter 1990).

[9] Benedict Anderson, Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism (New York: Verso, 1983).

[10] For estimates of the distribution and strength of ethnic and national groups in the Soviet Union based on the 1989 Soviet census, see “Ethnicity and Political Boundaries in the Soviet Union,” Office of the Geographer, US Department of State, 1990 (Map 0858 3–90 STATE [INR/GE]).

[11] When Korgun used the term coup d’etat instead of revolution at the 1990 Moscow workshop, a spirited intra-Soviet debate ensued. Korgun is one of the leading Soviet authorities on Afghanistan, served as a speechwriter for Afghan president Najibullah, and speaks Pushto fluently. Several Soviet participants later pointed out that the workshop provided one of the few occasions for an open discussion of the mistakes of Soviet policy in Afghanistan.

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The world is now undergoing a transformation as profound as that experienced with the rise of the territorial state system after the religious wars of Europe’s feudal period. Modern technology in defense and communications and “emerging trans-state patterns of commerce, politics, and cultural life” are rendering traditional notions of “frontier” obsolete.[1] Dispersed transnational communities—Sikhs in Canada, Muslims in Britain, Germany, France, and the U.S.—sectarian and ethnic militias sustained by emigre and foreign funds, and transnational banking, commercial, religious, and intellectual links often opaque to state authorities may not threaten the existence of the nation-state everywhere, but they serve as a poignant reminder that nation-states are not the only significant political actors in the late twentieth century.

The principle of autonomous “national” decision-making remains an ideal, but it is becoming increasingly circumscribed. The dissolution of the Soviet Union, the negotiations underway between Israel and the Arabs, and even the situation in Iraq suggest that the nation-state, as a model for political development, is not about to disappear. Nonetheless, transnational economic, religious, political, and ethnic movements and institutions increasingly constrain nation-states. Non-governmental actors, be they religious leaders, consortia of banks, or even intellectuals and scholars

proposing “grand bargains,” control information and knowledge and make decisions which limit state autonomy.

The long-term implications of the rising significance of non-state actors and transnational movements are difficult to discern. Academics and policy makers are little better than tourists in predicting the future of such complex situations as the newly independent “southern” (Muslim majority) states of the former Soviet Union, Iraq, or the implications of the victory of Islamic activist parties in the December 1991 Algerian elections. Major changes in religion and politics often occur incrementally and are not perceived as significant at the time. Only in retrospect are they recognized as sharp breaks with the past.

When Marc Bloch wrote that new social forms were not consciously created by successive generations but were created “in the process of trying to adapt the old,” he had in mind ties of dependence in feudal Europe.[2] Yet his observation applies equally to the issues which confront all who seek to understand contemporary politics and societies. Here I deal with two issues vital to understanding the Middle East: (1) The shifting frontiers of “areas”—in this case, the “Middle East”—in the late twentieth century, and (2) The influence of mass higher education and mass communication on the religious imagination in the Middle East and the growing—in my estimation, irreversible—impetus toward democratization.

Heeding Bloch’s caveat that major transformations can be identified only in retrospect, I tentatively advance these two themes, review—with the advantage of hindsight—the assessments of my predecessors, and conclude by suggesting how Middle Eastern studies, as they explore these themes and others, can be made more integral to the undergraduate liberal arts curriculum and to graduate studies in the various disciplines of the social sciences and the humanities and to the wider public.

*** Shifting Frontiers

We need to think beyond the limits of existing political and geographical frontiers in order to grasp the subtle links among economic and political currents, religious movements, and the movement of ideas. The statement of aims and scope printed on the inside front cover of every issue of The International Journal of Middle East Studies says that Europe and the Soviet Union are included “for the periods in which their territories were part of the Middle Eastern empires or were under the influence of Middle Eastern civilization.” By that criterion, recent developments in Central Asia and the southern Caucasus suggest that the Middle East has just expanded.

Robert Canfield argues that the traditional notion of “area” studies perpetuates division of the world into spheres that might have made sense for displaying museum artifacts in an earlier era but not for understanding dynamic political, social, and economic currents.[3] He suggests replacing “culture area” with the term oe cumene, a historically perpetuated complex of shared understandings and practices, to discern the intertwining ebb and flow of political, economic, ethnic, and religious currents that characterized Central Asia and the Iranian and Anatolian plateaus prior to the twentieth century and that now characterize them again in the wake of unsealed or porous frontiers.

In November 1992, for example, Azerbaijan changed its alphabet from Cyrillic script to Latin. It had changed from the Arabic to the Latin alphabet in 1926, two years before the change was made official in Turkey, but in 1940 Stalin ordered it abandoned in favor of Cyrillic script. Azerbaijanis regard the latest shift as restoring links with their national past. Other Central Asian republics may soon follow Azerbaijan’s lead or, especially in the case of Persian-speaking Tajikistan, opt instead for Persian script. A month prior to the official change of script in Baku, shop signs, plaques on public buildings, and street signs had already begun to appear in Latin script. Of the twenty telephones arrayed next to the desk of Azerbaijan’s president, Ayaz Mutalibov, the three which work regularly are direct fiberoptic connections to the Turkish network. Business school teachers from Istanbul commute regularly to Baku and the Central Asian republics, and 600 Azeri students currently study business and management in Turkey. Our Turkish colleagues note that language difficulties remain, but the gap between Azerbaijani Turkish and their own is closing rapidly.

These growing educational links parallel communications and infrastructure projects, banking agreements, and joint ventures. Turkey, its application to the European Economic Community held in suspense, sees major opportunities in Azerbaijan and Central Asia, a movement aided by linguistic and cultural affinities. Indeed, Turkey is Mutalibov's base for comparison in speaking of Azerbaijan's future. His optimistic prediction is that Azerbaijan's transformation from the USSR's economic system of central allocations to a "market" economy will require two decades—"half the time it took Turkey to achieve its transformation from empire to modern state and then from a state-run to a market economy"—rather than the 500 days envisioned by some economists—which suggests a realistic understanding of the complexities of change in politics and economics.[4] Understanding these transitions challenges existing theoretical conventions and tests to the limit the abilities of policy makers in the immediate region and those at a distance, including the United States.

Turkey offers what, for many observers and the secularly oriented leadership of Azerbaijan and Central Asia, is the most reassuring model of what might become of the newly independent republics—a secularized, democratic Muslim state in which religious sentiment and practice pervade public life but do not eclipse it. Iran offers an alternative model—a postrevolutionary state dominated by traditional clerics. Iran's clerics continue to Islamize from the top down, but other Iranian leaders seek the country's re-entry onto the world stage as a moderate and pragmatic state.

Iran offers a less likely model for the political elite of Central Asia and Azerbaijan, although its appeal to the rural masses is untested. Of the Central Asian republics, only Tajikistan is Persian-speaking, but nearly a third of Iran's population are Turkish-speaking Azerbaijanis, many of them integrated into Iran's civil and religious hierarchy. In terms of language, then, Iran is not at a major disadvantage, but it offers ex-Soviet Muslims less economic and technical promise. With the possible exception of arms, which cannot be discounted completely but which are also available elsewhere through porous frontiers, official Iranian aid is confined largely to scholarships, books, pamphlets, Arabic printing presses, and donations for the construction of mosques. Nonetheless, some Central Asians see the

Iranian model as an alternative to continued rule by the entrenched regional elites—some are locally called “Mafia”—that thrived under Soviet rule.

Fears of an Iranian influenced turn to religious radicalism appear exaggerated. The religious clerics who made their peace with the Soviet system and continue in place find the threat of Iran convenient, since it suffices to secure Arab financial support to perpetuate their own influence.

The Iranian model of Islamic radicalism, in which a traditional Islamic clergy captures power and the popular imagination, is already out of date. It forced Islamization from above. A more likely contemporary model for the late twentieth century is Islamization from below, as is happening in Algeria, where a loosely organized Islamic movement now challenges the Arab world’s most entrenched one-party rule. Existing elites in Central Asia, often unaware of popular sentiment, have reason to fear such movements because they offer a radical alternative to their continued rule. In some regions of Uzbekistan, for example, young militants preserve order where governmental institutions have failed.[5]

Rather than see Azerbaijan, the rest of the Caucasus, and Central Asia as peripheral to the Middle East, it might be more reasonable to think of multiple centers and peripheries in terms of language, economics, politics, and other spheres of national and transnational activity. The same applies to linkages between religious and political movements throughout the Muslim world.[6] Indeed, the notion of shifting centers and peripheries applies to ideas of Islam and leadership of the Muslim world. Most Muslims live outside the Middle East. Indonesia alone contains almost as many Muslims (140 million) as the Arab Middle East (162 million), and the Muslims of the Indian subcontinent (272 million) outnumber those of the Arab states, Iran, and Turkey combined (254 million). For some activists, a mosque in London or on Chicago’s South Side may be as central as Mecca or Cairo for meeting counterparts from elsewhere in the Muslim world.

Labor migration has played an important part in eroding frontiers as they have been traditionally defined, and in reconfiguring practical expressions through popularly generated movements. Labor migration has become for

the spread of ideas in the twentieth century what pilgrimage was in earlier eras. The title of a recent book on Muslims in France, Les banlieues de l’Islam (The suburbs of Islam), refers at one level to the “peripheral” towns where Muslims often live in France, where the presence of large numbers of Muslims is challenging notions of French identity. At another level, the title ironically acknowledges how Muslims and Muslim institutions in Europe and the United States, less constrained by censorship and political considerations than elsewhere in the world, are assuming a major voice in the intellectual leadership of Muslims worldwide.[7]

*** Mass Higher Education and the Religious Imagination

Two of my predecessors, John L. Esposito and Yvonne Y. Haddad, commented in their addresses that 1979 was a watershed in rediscovering the role that religion plays in Middle Eastern politics.[8] Of course, a parallel “discovery” of the role of religion in politics has been made elsewhere, including Latin America. A leading Soviet scholar, Mikhail Piotrovsky, said in 1990 that “twenty years ago we considered religious beliefs to be dying. Now we are reaping the harvest of this neglect.”[9] Soviet scholarship ascribed primacy to economic transformations and missed many other developments, but so did many Western scholars of the 1950s and 1960s. In line with the tenets of most versions of “modernization” theories, they considered religious beliefs and practices as part of a society’s “tradition” or “heritage,” not dynamic institutions creating major change.[10] As if to make up for past neglect of the influence of religious ideas and movements, we now have more studies focusing on religious radicalism, but few dealing with more general changes in intellectual currents. There have been dozens of recent conferences on radical Islamic movements, but only a handful which discuss, for example, broader currents of contemporary religiosity which also influence political practice.[11]

In searching for extremist movements and in attributing radicalism to rapid or insufficient economic change, it is easy to overlook equally basic transformations in areas such as higher education, to which access in the Middle East has expanded significantly in the last two decades. Mass higher education in the Arab and Muslim worlds is reshaping conceptions of self, religion, nation, and politics. It is as significant as the introduction of printed

books was in sixteenth-century rural France.[12] Ironically, however, we know more about literacy in medieval and pre-modern Europe than in the contemporary Muslim and Arab worlds. Many scholars have noted linkages between advanced education and religious activism, but many take at face value the claims of religious activists that they are reinstituting older forms of religious understanding and action rather than creating new ones, even if inadvertently. This deflects attention from both conceptual innovations and emerging networks for communication and action.

Religious activism in the political sphere, the claims of its adherents notwithstanding, is a distinctively modern phenomenon. It may be important in itself, but it also suggests basic transformations in ideas of what people accept as legitimate or just political authority. Ellis Goldberg develops this point in a recent essay on Egypt. Showing the inadequacy of arguments which attribute religious activism to social and economic “pressures,” he argues that activists are more likely to have disliked existing authority structures, both religious and secular, and to have sought the freedom to engage in “open religious discussion and action.” Their dialogue is less a search for the latest and most fashionable guru than attraction to “what are essentially groups of equals in which discussion over questions of ethics and morals are fairly wide-ranging.”[13] Likewise, Gregory Starrett looks not at extremist movements, but at how mass modern education in Egypt “has changed the way Egyptians think about religion.” The state’s use of education in the schools to combat what it considers extremism “merely increases the emphasis on Islam in Egyptian public culture.”[14]

These widespread changes in attitudes toward authority suggest that the revolution from above offered by Iran’s traditional religious elite is unlikely to recur. A more appropriate model for the 1990s and beyond might be Islamization from below, not as a return to the past, but as a sign of new and pervasive structures of authority in which the state becomes only one actor —admittedly an important one—among many. In Algeria, the Islamic movement has shaken the foundations of a rigidly organized party which held power for three decades in a state which had been effective in curtailing public expression and opposition.

If Iran offered a model for an earlier form of Islamization, Algeria is likely to emerge as the archetype for activist movements in the next decade.[15] At the same time, there are indications that the commitment of many religious activists to work within existing political structures to modify them is becoming more common. Religious movements in the Middle East, like those in the U.S. and Latin America, change significantly between generations; we are seeing the same thing in the Middle East today.[16]

Given these changing notions of authority, it is perhaps not overly optimistic to see hope for a growing democratization in the Middle East. In 1987, Michael Hudson's colleagues were "incredulous" when he said he would speak on this topic. If one agrees with Hudson, as I do, that democratization is not an "ideal condition but ... a process through which the exercise of political power by regime and state becomes less arbitrary, exclusive, and authoritarian,"[17] then multiple examples have emerged— Egypt, Algeria, Turkey, Iran, the Yemen, and perhaps soon some of the states of the Arabian peninsula. It is not only the changing nature of religious movements that offers hope in this respect, but, as my colleagues Susan Waltz and Kevin Dwyer indicate, the gathering momentum of human rights movements throughout the region.[18]

*** Area Studies in the 1990s

An "essential tension," to adapt Thomas Kuhn's phrase, pervades relations between area and disciplinary expertise.[19] Middle Eastern studies in the U.S., like studies of other major world areas, face the challenge of defining intellectual contributions to academic inquiry. In all the human sciences, a tension exists between disciplinary concerns and the interdisciplinary skills stressed by "area" specializations: proficiency in one or more non-Western languages and expertise in the histories and societies of a given region. At one end is economics, where area skills are regarded as peripheral to the discipline's main paradigmatic concerns; at the other end are history and anthropology, where the mastery of nonWestern languages, regional history, and culture is essential to seminal disciplinary work. With the exception of some departments of languages and literatures, most appointments are made by discipline and not by area speciality.

In her address last year, Yvonne Haddad discussed future prospects for area studies, and I return to this theme now. Projections for the future of area studies today are no more certain than they have been in the past. In a May 1967 report to the U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, the first elected president of the Middle East Studies Association concluded that the modern Middle East “is not a center of great cultural achievement, nor is it likely to become one in the near future,” so the study of the region and its languages “does not constitute its own reward.” A month before the June 1967 Arab-Israeli war, he also wrote that the Middle East “has been receding in immediate political importance to the U.S.”[20]

Recent assessments of the significance of studying the region are considerably more positive, but they are bleak about the future of area studies in the U.S. because of the severe economic constraints placed on both public and private universities.[21] The subject matter, of course, remains vital. Hudson’s 1987 depiction of expanding civil societies, while acknowledging the continued prevalence of authoritarian states, has proved reasonably accurate. In 1988, William Quandt saw military power and arms transfers declining in utility as leverage upon the region, and economic power on the rise.[22] One can only wish that his suggestion of trends were to be realized more quickly. Both Esposito and Haddad focused on how, a decade after the reawakening of interest in some aspects of Islam, studies on contemporary religious movements continue to lag. Studies of earlier periods have still to realize their full potential, although the vastly improved access to Ottoman archives, for example, is revitalizing historical studies of earlier eras and has prompted equally exciting work in demography and historical sociology.[23]

In most disciplines in the humanities and the social sciences, the ability to frame questions and to communicate across disciplinary lines is a sign of excellence. Even if departments take credit for nurturing academic distinction among their faculty, area centers play a key role in making such work possible. Admittedly, there are faculty within each discipline who advocate that abstract theoretical discourse devoid of regional or local content is the “jewel” of disciplinary activity. Most area studies specialists would argue, however, that effective theoretical advances are made on the

basis of analyzing historically known and specific societies and civilizations. The future of democracy, the idea of freedom, biological, ecological, and environmental constraints upon social formations, the future of the nation-state, and the re-imagining of territorial and national identities are not proprietary to any discipline and are enhanced by context-specific yet intensely comparative analysis, neither bound to the immediate present nor confined to the distant past. Studies such cis Stephen Humphreys' Islamic History suggest ways in which studies of the past can be made vital both in themselves and to contemporary political and social concerns.[24]

In addition to these general concerns, which apply to all area studies, the region's intrinsic interest in terms of its ancient and classical civilizations and societies is complemented by current issues: the roles of language, literature, and religion in sustaining and challenging modern states, the strengths and limitations of political, linguistic, and ethnic pluralism, gender issues and the roles of women, and linkages between migration and the inequalities of development.

Seemingly like heavy industry, higher education in the United States goes through major fluctuations in funding and support. The 1991 NCASA report referred to above indicates that many universities are reducing their commitment to area studies and down-grading their commitment to teaching non-Western languages. There are, however, signs of wider recognition of the long-term importance of area studies in terms of federal support. In the mid-1980s, a legislative proposal was put forward to stabilize federal support for international studies and foreign language training in the form of a National Foundation for International Studies.[25] Although this initiative was stillborn, there are recent signs of a renewed recognition of the significance of area studies. One is the authorization of a new program, part of the State Department Authorization Bill, the "Near and Middle East Research and Training Act."[26] Another major initiative, passed and appropriated just as MESA's 1991 annual meeting came to an end in Washington, is the National Security Education Act of 1991.[27]

The fact that the latter act was passed with virtually no public comment or debate reminds all of us concerned with foreign area studies of our

responsibilities. First, we need to assume a more vigorous role in the public debate over policy issues. If we do not seek to contribute significantly to the shaping of legislation, it will be made for us in ways which may damage the integrity of foreign area studies. Second, we can do more to make the study of the Middle East a more integral part of the undergraduate liberal arts curriculum. It should not be seen as a specialized area of study but as a central element in the study of non-Western civilizations in the undergraduate and even the pre-collegiate curriculum. Finally, we can do more to enhance and sustain our institutional and personal links with colleagues and students in the Middle East and elsewhere. The creation of foreign area knowledge knows no frontiers, and our intellectual vitality is sustained by these complex, fragile, and poorly understood bonds of cooperation and trust. It would be unfortunate if recent legislation, intended to provide a stable base for foreign area studies and training in an era of shifting and uncertain frontiers, inadvertently undermines them instead.

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[1] Seyom Brown, “The Nation State in the Year 2010.” Paper delivered at a meeting on the “Nation-State” convened by Shell Oil Company at Cambridge Energy Research Associates, January 10, 1989, p. 2.

[2] Marc Bloch, Feudal Society, trans. L. A. Manyon (University of Chicago Press, Chicago 1961 [orig. 1939]), 148.

[3] Robert L. Canfield, “Preface,” in Turco-Persia in Historical Perspective, ed. Robert L. Canfield (Cambridge University Press, New York 1991) xiii-xiv.

[4] Interview, Baku, September 18, 1991.

[5] See Abdujabbar Abduvakhitov, “Islamic Revival In Uzbekistan,” in Muslim Politics and Societies: Russian, Central Asian, and U.S. Perspectives, ed. Dale F. Eickelman (Indiana University Press, Bloomington, in press).

[6] See the maps presented in Xavier Raufer, Atlas mondial de Plslam activiste (La Table Ronde, Paris 1991) 19-34.

[7] See, for example, Sadik J. al-Azm, “The Importance of Being Earnest about Salman Rushdie,” Die Welt des Islams 31.1 (1991) 1-49, perhaps the most perceptive essay written on the Rushdie affair and one of the few to discussion in detail the responses of Muslim intellectuals.

[8] John L. Esposito, “The Study of Islam: Challenges and Prospects” (Presidential Address, 1989), Middle East Studies Association Bulletin 24 (July 1990) 1-11; and Yvonne Y. Haddad, “Middle East Area Studies: Current Concerns and Future Directions” (Presidential Address, 1990), MESA Bulletin 25 (1991) 1-13.

[9] Quoted in Dale F. Eickelman and Kamran Pasha, “Muslim Societies and Politics: Soviet and US Approaches—A Conference Report,” Middle East Journal 45 (1991) 632.

[10] Leonard Binder, “The Natural History of Development Theory,” Comparative Studies in Society and History 28 (1986) 3-33.

[11] Exceptions include Yvonne Yazbeck Haddad, ed., The Muslims of America (Oxford University Press, New York 1991), and Gilles Kepel and Yann Richard, Intellectuels et militants de I’Islam contemporain (Seuil, Paris 1990).

[12] On France, see Natalie Zenon Davis, Society and Culture in Early Modern France (Stanford University Press, Stanford 1975) 189-226.

[13] Ellis Goldberg, “Smashing Idols and the State: The Protestant Ethic and Egyptian Sunni Radicalism,” Comparative Studies in Society and History 33 (1991) 3-35. See also Dale F. Eickelman, “Mass Higher Education and the Religious Imagination in Contemporary Arab Societies,” American Ethnologist (in press).

[14] Gregory Steven Starrett, “Our Children and Our Youth: Religious Education and Political Authority in Mubarak’s Egypt,” Ph.D. dissertation submitted to the Department of Anthropology, Stanford University, August 1991, p. iv.

[15] For an excellent study of Algeria’s activist movement, see Ahmed Rouadjia, Les freres ei la mosquee: Enquete sur le mouvement islamiste en Algerie (Karthala, Paris 1990).

[16] James Davison Hunter, Evangelicalism: The Coming Generation (University of Chicago Press, Chicago 1987) 206.

[17] Michael C. Hudson, “Democratization and the Problem of Legitimacy in Middle East Politics” (1987 Presidential Address), MESA Bulletin 22 (1988) 157.

[18] Kevin Dwyer, Arab Voices: The Human Rights Debate in the Middle East (The University of California Press, Berkeley and Los Angeles 1991), and Susan Waltz, “Making Waves: The Political Impact of Human Rights Groups in North Africa,” Journal of Modern African Studies 29.3 (1991) 481-504.

[19] Thomas S. Kuhn, The Essential Tension: Selected Studies in Scientific Tradition and Change (University of Chicago Press, Chicago 1977).

[20] Morroe Berger, “Middle Eastern and North African Studies: Development and Needs,” MESA Bulletin 1.2 (November 1967) 16.

[21] National Council of Area Studies Associations [NCASA], Prospects for Faculty in Area Studies (National Council of Area Studies Associations, Stanford 1991).

[22] William B. Quandt, “The Superpowers and Middle East Crises” (Presidential Address 1988), MESA Bulletin 23 (1989) 1-8.

[23] For example, Alan Duben and Cem Behar, Istanbul Households: Marriage, Family, and Fertility, 1880-1940 (Cambridge University Press, New York 1991).

[24] R. Stephen Humphreys, Islamic History: A Framework for Inquiry, rev. ed. (Princeton University Press, Princeton 1991).

[25] See Richard D. Lambert, Points of Leverage: An Agenda for a National Foundation for International Studies (Social Science Research Council, New York 1986). This proposal was preceded by a wide-ranging study, funded in part by the U.S. Department of Defense but administered by the Association of American Universities: Richard D. Lambert, Beyond Growth: The Next Stage in Language and Area Studies (Association of American Universities, Washington 1984).

[26] Steven Heydemann, “The Near and Middle East Research and Training Act: Background and Current Status,” MESA Newsletter 13.4 (November 1991) 1, 4.

[27] See Kenneth J. Cooper, “Foreign Studies Expansion is Pressed,” Washington Post, November 26, 1991, p. A15, and Pamela Fessler, “Bill Sent to Bush Would Create International Scholarships,” Congressional Quarterly, November 23, 1991, p. 3470. Senator

David L. Boren, author of the act and chairman of the Senate Intelligence Committee, describes the new program, part of the 1992 Intelligence Authorization Act, as the biggest expansion of international and foreign language studies in the United States since the National Defense Education Act of 1958. However, the language of the act risks undermining the very purpose for which it was intended. Proponents of the act maintain that recipients of grants from the program are prohibited from “conducting U.S. intelligence activities while participating in the program,” but it is difficult to envision why foreign governments, academic institutions, and foreign colleagues would accept such assurances of autonomy at face value when one purpose of the act is to increase the pool of applicants for U.S. national security agencies, and the board overseeing the act includes the Secretary of Defense and the Director of Central Intelligence. The 1984 Lambert Report and its critics earlier raised the problems of identifying subjects of scholarly research and university-based area studies programs with intelligence requirements. These concerns persist: see Adam Przeworski, “The Lambert Report,” PS 19.1 (Winter 1986) 78-83, and Dale F. Eickelman and Marilyn Waldman, “Defense Intelligence Agency Research Contracts: A Report to the MESA Membership,” MESA Newsletter 7.1 (Winter 1985) 8-11.

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*** Thick Interpretation in The Middle East[1]

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The Middle East (Eickelman 1981) represents the first serious attempt at a general survey of the area from an American anthropologist's point of view since Coon's Caravan (1958) and Patai's Golden River to Golden Road (1962). Like its predecessors, it is written for the general reader as well as the student and professional; to quote the jacket, "It deals with inquiry and discovery rather than a review of the literature." Like Coon, Eickelman has sought widespread circulation for his ideas, basing the book on his own Middle Eastern anthropology series for CBS television's "Sunrise Semester."

The book has four parts: Part 1 introduces some "practical" assumptions concerning the way in which the Middle East has been understood in the past and considers the contributions of explorers, historians, sociologists, and anthropologists to this understanding; Part 2 interprets the present and attempts to abstract the patterns of "meaning" that Middle Easterners give to their society and culture; Part 3 is concerned with the Islamic "vision" of religion and society and deals with its capacity to reformulate eternal "truths" in a modern setting; and Part 4 assesses the "impact" of political and economic change on "traditional" Middle Eastern structures and values. It is with respect to the interpretation of cultures in Parts 2 and 3 that Eickelman means to distance himself from the view of anthropology in the Middle East offered by his functionalist predecessors. It is, accordingly, to this aspect of the book that my remarks will be devoted.

Part 2 begins with the acknowledgment that formal ideology is not all there is to traditional social structure. Indeed, these consciously elaborated presentations of the social order need not be entertained by all, or even most, of the natives. They may be restricted to socially and political "dominant" individuals, that is, individuals who are the agents of, and mediators with, outside authorities. Such ideologies may even owe their existence, in part, to the designs of colonial administrators who required a neat delineation of indigenous social forms in order to ensure for themselves

a bureaucratically efficient means of control. Considerations such as these lead the author to remark (p. 85) that “regardless of the attitude of social theorists today toward contemporary versions of Marxism, the central problem posed by Marx of the relationship between ideology and society continues to inform contemporary social thought.” It is from this perspective that Eickelman proceeds to an examination of the ideology of the “tribe” in Morocco.

From the viewpoint of French colonial rule in Morocco, indigenous tribal boundaries were permanently set according to a system of strictly segmentary patrilineages. At first glance the French, it seems, were simply following the native idea of reckoning descent exclusively through the father’s line and uniting all persons of a specified degree of descent from a certain male ancestor into a tribe. In native practice, however, genealogies are often manipulated by those with the power to do so. Agnatic relationships are conveniently invented or forgotten as post hoc ideological justifications for social, economic, and political alliances. Moreover, given the nature of lineage endogamy and endemic competition between inheritors of the limited tribal patrimony, it is inevitable that such extra-agnatic alliances take place. The specific character and extent of such alliances are variable, though, and this is reflected in fluid tribal boundaries. The exact demarcation of these boundaries depends upon the spatially and temporally contingent disposition of women, livestock, land, and other patrimonial legacies throughout the ancestral domain of any number of competing “tribes.”

As Eickelman tells it, “The French found this flexibility confusing for administrative purposes, especially when tribesmen crossed administrative boundaries” (p. 96). Accordingly, “the French argued (in line with popular sociological assumptions of the period) that only collective arrangements [among agnatic sections] were Traditional.’” The French understanding of tribal structure thus actually “depended more upon the ideology of agnatic relationships than did the Moroccan tribesmen themselves” (p. 96). It was the French, then, who narrowly fixed the “traditional” tribe in place, thereby upsetting the wide and fluid network of pastoral arrangements that did not meet the formal ideological criterion. The difficulties this circumstance created were seen by the authorities as yet further evidence that indigenous structures did not function adequately of their own accord. This provided additional justification for the meddling of colonial authorities in indigenous

affairs, thus increasing the viciousness of the ideological circle. Given the symbiotic relationship which obtained between colonialism and functional anthropology, it is not surprising to find the situation underscored by the widespread currency of segmentation theory (e.g., Evans-Pritchard 1949). This theoretical posture remained largely unquestioned until Peters's (1967) attack, and it is this attack which primarily informs Eickelman's critique.

Following the appeal to Marx, and having thus illustrated the abuses of ideology with respect to the formal concept of the tribe (and, similarly, with regard to the ideologically deceptive notion of "equality"), Eickelman might reasonably have been expected to proceed with an analysis of the tribe in terms of underlying social and material relationships; in line with Cuisenier's Economic et Parents (1975), he might have examined the role of the conflict between an essentially expansive kinship system and a restricted environment in delineating the scope and limits of the tribal patrimony. Instead, he appeals to the implicit notion of "practical" ideology, rather than to formally explicit ideology, as a basis for understanding the tribe, in particular, and Middle Eastern society, in general. For Eickelman, such practical ideologies are "sets of beliefs constituted by largely implicit shared assumptions concerning such basic aspects of the social order as notions of tribe, kinship, person, sexuality, nation, religion, and world view" (p. 86). This is arguably a reasonable approach to an ethnographic understanding of how people think about their own culture and society, though not to a properly historical understanding. Presumably, implicit ideologies, unlike formal ideologies, do inform social actions. They may, however, still contain incompatible, even contradictory, rationales for action. Although these contrary ideas do get historically resolved in some actual course of action, the native ideology may forego an interpretation of this resolution. Thus, to know the native ideology is not necessarily to know the course of history. Additionally, even granting that an ethnographic understanding of native ideology is a worthy goal in itself, Eickelman's notion of practical ideology fails to provide the appropriate framework for achieving it.

Practical ideologies supposedly reflect the social sentiments of "ordinary" tribesmen, not those of the colonial administrator, the academic anthropologist, or the native elite. Such practical ideologies, however, apparently do not represent consciously well-articulated models of the social

order; rather, “the term practical emphasizes that these concepts of identity emerge primarily through social action and not through abstract reflection on the social order” (p. 89). Nevertheless, we are asked to consider practical ideologies not simply in terms of action, but also with respect to those “meanings” which attach to action (pp. 86–87):

<quote>

Notions of tribe, kinship, ethnicity, sexuality, and religion all constitute shared cultural meanings, ways of making sense of the social world and of informing action within it. All patterns of cultural meaning are generated, maintained, and often transformed through their social use. If patterns of meaning are generated through social action, why do many of them (such as notions of family) appear to remain relatively stable over long periods of time, in spite of the massive economic, political, and social transformations of many parts of the Middle East over the last half-century? Or is it just that some patterns of meaning appear more stable, perhaps those practical ideologies so taken for granted that they are not fully articulated (and thus not subject to conscious manipulation)? A related issue concerns the limits of ambiguity and multiple interpretations of symbolic statements and how such ambiguity often facilitates the accommodation of major social and political changes.

</quote>

Why patterns of meaning appear to remain stable over time, given that they are the products of action in flux, is one of the central issues in current anthropological debate in the United States. The problem this question expresses, however, is itself specious, for a discrimination of actions can no more “generate” the manner in which they are interpreted (i.e., the ideologies which inform them) than meter readings can generate a theory of physics. Moreover, ideologies do not wholly consist of “meanings” in any linguistically or philosophically rigorous sense.

Eickelman warns the reader that the problem of “how an essentially ideological claim ... can come to resemble actual norms for action that are followed” is a “complex” matter (p. 79). Just how complex he does not seem to recognize. Either practical ideologies are truly norms of behavior, that is, resumes of actions (in which case “ideology” amounts to nothing more than an uninterpreted statistical summary of behavior), or practical ideologies interpret behavior. In the one case practical ideologies are but behavioral dispositions, that is, logical constructs of action. The putative generative factor, or cause (behavior), cannot, therefore, be ontologically distinguished from the putative effect (idea). In this case, then, there is no significant sense in which action generates ideology. In the other case, practical ideologies are truly interpretive, that is, furnish the schema and rationale for action; they are, therefore, ontologically distinct from, and epistemically prior to, the behaviors they inform. This is not to deny that actions could be judged on independent grounds as compatible or incompatible with an ideology or that some actual course of action could lead to the adoption or abandonment of a given ideology; it is merely to say that actions can only select for, but never create, interpretive ideologies (cf. Hirschfeld, Atran, and Yengoyan 1982).

Ideologies may remain stable through the flux of action precisely because they are causally independent of (i.e., ontologically distinct from) actions. Talk of “consciousness” as a factor of stability is misleading. Indeed, Eickelman argues at one point that the formal (consciously articulated) institutions and rules of pastoral society underwent little profound change despite the upheavals in the political and economic order. Lack of conscious articulation is not, in itself, either a necessary or a sufficient condition for stability; the United States Constitution, for example, remains a highly stable and conscious ideological construct, while the largely unconscious ideology of taste and decorum is highly responsive to social transformation.

Turning to questions of meaning, Eickelman appeals to the Geertzian notion of “thick description” as the best way of conveying the “meaning” members of a society give to their own culture. He also argues that thick description provides the ideal means for “interpreting” events and their significance. He fails to recognize however, that interpretations and descriptions are of different epistemological orders. To see why this is so it is sufficient to

consider Eickelman’s interpretation of the (Moroccan) Bni Bataw notion of qbila, which he renders as “tribe.”

Eickelman concedes that qbila cannot be directly translated as “tribe’; rather, he seems to be claiming that the Moroccan term qbila and the English term “tribe” have comparable import, or “meaning.” The practical ideology which presumably underlies the Moroccan tribal concept is conveyed in English by the term “closeness,” a term for which there appears to be no direct translation in the language of the Bni Bataw. At one point Eickelman seems to indicate that “closeness” is simply an anthropological convenience for relating various aspects of native behavior which evidence a vague, undefined sort of unity: “Closeness flows along a number of lines besides ‘blood’ [i.e., besides segmentary patrilineages]. It can develop through cooperation with nearby households, mutual herding arrangements, kinship and patronage relations, and other bonds of mutual interest” (p. 93). But he asserts that “closeness” is meant to reflect “how tribesmen themselves comprehend society” (p. 92) and that this notion is the one which actually does admit certain kinds of related behaviors: “The notion of ‘closeness’ ... is a more comprehensive one [than ‘blood’] which allows for considerable variations in the forms which social action can take in Morocco” (p. 97).

What exactly, then, is the meaning of “closeness”? There is none in this context. The author provides the term as a gloss for the ideology underlying the native’s notion of qbila. The English term, however, is not to be understood in terms of its literal meaning in English; rather, the author implicitly asks the reader to keep the literal English meaning in mind but to extend that meaning in indefinite ways to color the interpretation of the English term “tribe.” Similarly, the English term “tribe” is not to be taken in its literal English sense; rather, that literal sense is meant to color the reader’s interpretation of the English term “closeness.” It is through such reciprocal coloration of English terms that the reader is supposed to get a “feel” for whatever it is that conceptually informs those actions which the Bni Bataw attribute to their term qbila.

The success of this boot-strapping enterprise depends upon the richness of the interpretive devices which the ethnographer places at the disposal of his

audience.[2] The more numerous and evocative the cues the reader is given, that is, the more thickly textured the interpretation, the more he is able to restrict and guide his imagination to just those evocations that make the terms mutually understandable. But the field of evocation is not, and can never be, reduced to a single set of meanings. The interpretive texts in which these terms are embedded can only point the way to understanding; they cannot provide fixed descriptions of what is understood.

According to Eickelman (p. 110),

<quote>

Kinship can be considered an experience-distant concept. It is formulated for the purpose of the analytically inclined participant to comprehend a phenomenon or to compare it with others, either typologically or through “family resemblances.” On the other hand, experience-near concepts are those which individuals use “naturally and effortlessly” to define what they see, feel, think, and imagine and which they “readily understand when similarly applied by others” [here Eickelman is quoting Geertz]. “Closeness” is such a concept in Morocco.

</quote>

Although experience-distant concepts lack the “naturalness” of experience-near concepts, they too supposedly possess “meanings” in the form either of definite descriptions or of a “family” of such descriptions, that is, “partial similarities that can meaningfully be compared and contrasted, rather than exact identities asserted by simpler but less accurate theoretical assumptions” (p. 104). But the Wittgensteinian notion of “family resemblances” is improperly used here. For this notion to apply, the constituent statements of a family of descriptions must still be descriptions; however, as long as the (experience-near) terms remain “colored” in such a way as to be resistant to definition, the interpretive statements which bear them cannot be deemed descriptions; they are not meaning-bearing assertions with definite propositional content. These statements cannot,

therefore, be rigorously examined for logical consistency or strictly tested—and ultimately falsified—against the empirical evidence at hand.[3] This being the case, it follows that the (experience-distant) paradigms which employ such statements, such as kinship, religion, etc., also cannot be ascribed any definite meaning, that is, any fixed truth-valuable content. Such paradigms cannot, in other words, bear theories in any significant sense.

Eickelman, like Geertz, concedes that ethnography does not aim actually to produce falsifiable theories—that it “does not attempt to assess social forms ‘scientifically’ ” (p. 324). He would also no doubt agree with Evans-Pritchard, who, having abandoned his earlier “scientific” functionalism, came to believe that ethnography “seeks patterns and not scientific laws, and interprets rather than explains” (1962:26). But also like Geertz (though unlike Evans-Pritchard), Eickelman wants to offer a middle ground between scientific and nonscientific speculation by describing the data of social life and interpreting them in terms of patterns of meaning. If this were possible, then ethnography could reasonably hope to supply us with the meaningful facts of social life; yet this it cannot do. This is not to say that the sentences which make up the interpretive text necessarily lack meaning, i.e., factual content, but to acknowledge that the import of such a text is not exhausted by the meaning of its constituent sentences. Interpretation aims to convey something “more” than literal description. It is not, in other words, sufficient that an ethnography be able to provide a strict translation of native sentences, even if this were possible. The interpretive text must also be able to evoke in “us” what the natives’ corresponding sentences evoke in “them.”

There are, furthermore, symbolic aspects of thought such as poetry and religion whose essential character is, precisely, that they cannot be pinned down with any specific meaning. They are meant to be evocative. Poetry would cease to be creative if its meaning were secure, and religion would not be able to adapt to social exigencies if its factual content were fixed. The responsive features of Islam’s “vision” of “eternal truth,” which Eickelman discusses in Part 3, could hardly operate if that vision were rigorously consistent and strictly truth-valuable. As Rappaport (1979:209; cf. Sperber 1974) notes, it is the very nature of religious belief to be ineffable:

<quote>

The Shema, “hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is One,” is an example.... Such sentences have peculiar qualities. Having no [definite] material reference they are neither verifiable nor falsifiable, and yet they are regarded as unquestionable. I take sanctity to be the quality of unquestionableness imputed by a congregation to postulates in their nature neither verifiable nor falsifiable. This is to say that sanctity is ultimately a quality of discourse and not of the objects with which the discourse is concerned.

</quote>

Religious ideology is capable of effective reformulation to meet the contingencies of social change precisely because its formulation is inherently ambiguous and thus conducive to varying interpretations. The millions who quote the Quran, the Bible, Qadhafi’s Green Book, or Mao’s Little Red Book to one another certainly intend to convey not a literal meaning (e.g., “Let a thousand flowers bloom” is hardly a compelling literal statement), but an incitement to evocation. This incitement takes the form of a “conduit metaphor” which is meant to be ambiguous enough to allow for a personalized, idiosyncratic understanding and directed enough that different persons can recognize in one another similar sentiments, without anyone’s being able to say what those sentiments precisely consist of.

Thick interpretation, if it is successful, as in Geertz’s Islam Observed (1968), should convey to the reader a sense of what it is like to think in native terms: not to perceive the facts as the native does (often, as in the case of religion, there just are no hard facts to perceive), but to be able to share the native’s sentiment. This kind of ethnography reminds one of Schiller’s couplet “Only fullness leads to clarity/And truth lies in the abyss.” To confuse interpretation with description, however, is to give the abyss a false bottom.

Although the concepts of thick-interpretation ethnography cannot be strictly falsified or tested for logical consistency, they can be judged more or less adequate to the central task of ethnography, viz., “understanding” native life. Functional accounts were, after all, not abandoned because they were false, but because they were inappropriate for what one has come to feel is the proper goal of ethnography. In the past, it was sufficient to intuit enough of native life to be able to exercise a certain control over it. Today, ethnography seems more bent on “communication.” Judged by corporate or diplomatic standards, Eickelman’s performance on this task would likely be deemed successful, but insofar as considerations of history and social conflict are largely phrased within the idiom of “tradition” and (Western) “impact” the dialogue he offers with the people of the region is not altogether adequate.

*** Reply

by Dale F. Eickelman

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It is impossible to discern the scope, structure, and intent of The Middle East from Atran’s commentary. He tries to convey these in his opening two paragraphs largely by reproducing copy written for the book’s cover by a publisher’s assistant. For example, he reproduces the statement on the cover that it “deals with inquiry and discovery rather than a review of the literature.” Most scholarly reviewers take an author’s preface as a more reliable statement of a book’s goals. Had Atran done so, he would have read: “Although this book is in part necessarily a synthesis of major research, I seek to develop a particular style of anthropological inquiry and show its contribution to the study of a region of complex civilization rather than provide an exhaustive review of the literature” (p. x). The preface further explains that the book is heavily documented and extensively discusses the works of both predecessors and (through 1980) contemporaries because of a decision “not to seek to popularize by softening the edges of difficult problems” (p. xi).

With one exception, Atran’s exegetical comments are loosely based upon approximately 30 pages of a 330-page book. His reliance upon publisher’s copy and disregard of most of the book’s contents leads to a misapprehension of its principal arguments. Thus he discerns from the cover that the key notion of “tradition” in the book (especially Part IV) is used principally to describe the cultural and social life of the Middle East prior to Western “impact.” In fact, this understanding of tradition is specifically criticized on several occasions (e.g., pp. 49–50, 176), and the term often appears in quotation marks to alert the reader to a much more nuanced usage in relation to such themes as the legitimation of past and present political institutions, the multilayered meanings of “tribe” as used by Middle Easterners in various historical contexts, and the reinterpretations by Muslims of Islam and Islamic knowledge. Indeed, I repeatedly make the point in an extensive discussion of Islam that, to follow Atran, religious ideologies “would not be able to adapt to social exigencies if [their] factual content were fixed.”

A central theoretical goal in The Middle East is to use recent Middle Eastern studies to show the potential of the interpretive approach to social anthropology for situating the analysis of systems of cultural meanings more firmly in the political and economic contexts in which they occur. A principal argument in the book is that systems of meaning “shape and in turn are shaped by the particular social, economic, and historical formations in which they occur” (p. 85). I trace this classical formulation to Marx and Engels for a specific reason: There has been a tendency for some adherents of a “political economy” approach to social anthropology to treat cultural meanings as secondary to economic and political “realities,” as if these configurations were somehow uninfluenced by cultural meanings. Practitioners of interpretive anthropology for their part have often engaged in the analysis of systems of meanings to the exclusion of the “hard” historical, economic, and political circumstances in which such patterns of meaning are maintained and reproduced. Atran distorts my position and claims that I see ideologies merely as “generated” by social action. Instead, I argue that ideologies should be understood as shaping, and in turn being shaped by, social action. He leaves off half the argument and changes it entirely, while reiterating the virtues of considering ideologies as independent of the contexts in which they are used.

My own position offers a constructive departure from this earlier “objective” notion of cultural meanings as “things” to be discerned and analyzed by anthropologists to the exclusion of a necessary concern with who uses such meanings and how they are made and used. I am hardly alone in seeking to enhance interpretive anthropology by considering such issues. Especially in discussing the notion of practical ideology I refer to the excellent work of Bourdieu (1977; see also Eickelman 1979, Giddens 1979), who, especially through his notion of habitus, offers an analogous formulation. Far from being devoid of historical content, such a formulation of the concept of ideology gives central emphasis to historical concerns, a fact which I emphasize in a discussion of the necessary complementarity of sociological and historical explanation (pp. 8–13). This position is far from regarding ethnographic and “properly historical” understandings as separate and unrelated.

I argue in The Middle East that the notion of practical ideology facilitates the comprehension of crucial dimensions of cultural identity. The notion of “tribe” is one of these. I discuss it first precisely because it is one of the more difficult forms of cultural identities for “Westerners” (and, for that matter, many urbanized Middle Easterners) to comprehend and because of its past and present political importance. Contrary to Atran’s misreading, practical ideologies are hardly confined to any one group in society, such as “ordinary” tribesmen. Nor of course are they the only ones to inform social action. Of greater importance, ideologies such as “tribe” are subject to multiple interpretations and uses, so that distinctions between “formal,” “practical,” and other notions of ideology overlap in practice. How these multiple interpretations of tribe fit together is related to who offers particular representations of tribal alignments and in what contexts. My argument, far from being essentially based upon Peters’s interesting but very different one concerning segmentary lineage theory, bears much more relation to the work of Bourdieu and others linking the study of cultural meanings to specific contexts of history and domination.

Confusion similarly prevails in Atran’s discussion of the Moroccan cultural notion of “closeness” in The Middle East and, by extension, his notion of interpretation. “Closeness” is an explicitly “native” concept of

relationship. It also possesses important implicit dimensions which are explored in the contexts of tribal, personal, and “kinship” identities. Here Atran’s argument is especially bewildering. He has me “concede” that key cultural concepts depicting social relationships cannot be given meaningful one-word denotational translations in another language and rather astonishingly states that there “appears” to be no direct translation for “closeness”—an explicit Moroccan cultural construct—in the “language” of a particular Moroccan tribe whose social organization and self-identities I discuss. Atran’s confusion appears in part to be due to his difficulty in seeing that cultural constructs such as “closeness” can have at the same time both explicitly articulated and implicit dimensions and that their full comprehension is one of the goals of interpretive anthroplogy.

Atran concludes opaquely by stating that The Middle East is successful “if judged by corporate or diplomatic standards.” The book is intended to indicate how the anthropological study of the Middle East has contributed both to an understanding of this major civilizational region and to the classification of certain key issues in social anthropological theory. I am pleased that the book has stimulated Atran at least to comment upon an element of the latter dimension. I suggest that in his next scholarly review he rely less heavily upon book jackets and instead seek to represent accurately and comprehensively the content of the book under discussion.

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[1] © 1982 by the Wenner-Gren Foundation for Anthropological Research, all rights reserved 0011-3204/82/2306-0006 $1.00.

[2] Sperber (1981:82, translation mine) discusses the matter as follows: “When a term is without straightforward translation, all that can be done is either to approximate it with a term having comparable pragmatic implications, which amounts to mistranslating it somewhat (as when Arab jihad is rendered “Holy War”); or to borrow it rather than translate it (as “vizier” and “guru” in English); or to render it by a word stripped of its standard meaning and used with a stipulated meaning [e.g., “closeness” for qbila}. The difference between these three devices is not always clear-cut.” (“Lorsqu’un terme n’a pas, a strictement parler, de traduction, il reste trois possibilites: on peut en donner le sens approche au moyen d’un terme dont les implications pragmatiques sont comparables (comme par exemple lorsque l’arabe djihad et traduit par ‘Guerre sainte’); ou bien, faute de traduire le terme, on peut 1’emprunter (comme ‘vizir’ et ‘gourou’ en francais); ou encore on peut le rendre au moyen d’un mot depouille de son sens ordinaire et employe avec un sens stipule. La difference entre ces trois procedes n’est pas toujours tranchee.”)

[3] To give the meaning of something is to provide the necessary and sufficient conditions for the determination of just what, exactly, that something is. Since thick interpretations aim to convey a sense of what the terms of another culture are likely to be, it seems

to follow that such interpretations can naturally be considered descriptions, that is, meaning-bearing statements. But descriptions are truth-valuable propositions; they are adequate representations only when they are true of what they purport to represent. Interpretations, however, are not truth-valuable: strictly speaking, they are neither true nor false, but ambiguous. This ambiguity is not a failing of ethnography; on the contrary, it is essential to the task for which description alone is notoriously insufficient.

The importance of descriptions which convey meaningful propositions about the world is that they can enter into a logical calculus. Only descriptions, therefore, can bear the facts which scientific law or commonsense understanding purports to explain. Interpretations, though, have no definite propositional content. Because they have no fixed content they cannot be rigorously tested by logical procedures for consistency, nor is there any strict evidential criterion for determining whether they might be false. Interpretations are useful or not, never true or false.

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updated version of this article will appear as “The Middle East’s Democracy’s Deficit and the Expanding Public Sphere,” in Peter Van Der Veer and Shoma Munshi (eds.), Media, War, and Terrorism (London: Routledge Curzon 2004).

WASHINGTON POLICY MAKERS acknowledged a new sense of public in the Muslim-majority and Arab worlds even before the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks. For them, it is called the “Arab street,”

<quote>

a new phenomenon of public accountability, which we have seldom had to factor into our projections of Arab behavior in the past. The information revolution, and particularly the daily dose of uncensored television coming out of local TV stations like al-Jazira and international coverage by CNN and others, is shaping public opinion, which, in turn, is pushing Arab governments to respond. We don’t know, and the leaders themselves don’t know, how that pressure will impact on Arab policy in the future.[1]

</quote>

The use of the term “street,” rather than “public sphere” or “public,” imputes passivity or a propensity to easy manipulation and implies a lack of formal or informal leadership. Nonetheless, this use of “street” shows how policy makers now acknowledge that authoritarian and single-party states also have “publics” to take into account.

*** Being Muslim and Modern

Prior to the events of September 11, 2001, the main theme of this essay would have been that rapidly increasing levels of education, greater ease of travel, and the rise of new communications media are rapidly developing a public sphere in Muslim-majority societies in which large numbers of people

—and not just an educated, political, and economic elite—want a say in religion, governance, and public issues. The consequent fragmentation of religious and political authority challenges authoritarianism. It can lead to more open societies, just as globalization has been accompanied by such developments as Vatican II and secular transnational human rights movements. These movements show the positive side of globalization, in which small but determined transnational groups work toward goals that improve the human condition.

The leaders of such movements, including religious interpreters, often lack theological and philosophical sophistication. They can, however, motivate a minority and persuade a wider public of the justice of their cause, changing implicit, practical understandings of ethical issues in the process. There is, however, a darker side to globalization: the fragmentation of authority, and the growing ability of large numbers of people to participate in wider spheres of religious and political debates and practical action can also have highly negative outcomes. This darker side is epitomized by Osama bin Laden and the al-Qa'ida terrorist movement. The movement is not noted for its theoretical sophistication. In quality of thought, Bin Laden and his associates, such as the Egyptian physician Ayman al-Zawahiri, are no match for Thomas Hobbes, Martin Heidegger, Yusuf al-Qaradawi, or Muhammad Shahrur. They have, however, demonstrated a public relations genius that, combined with massive and dramatic terrorist acts, have caught the world by surprise and built on anti-Western sentiments.

The Bin Laden/al-Qa'ida view of world politics is powerfully timeless—appealing to unity and faith regardless of a balance of power against them, attributing the evils of this world to Christians and Jews, and to Muslims who associate with them and thus pervert the goals of the umma, the worldwide community of true believers. Does not the Qur'an say that polytheists should be fought until they cease to exist (Q. 9:5) and that those who do not rule by God's law are unbelievers and, by implication, should be resisted (Q. 5:44)?[2]

These interpretations of scripture are highly contestable and should not be taken as harbingers of a coming Clash of Civilizations or, in Gilles Kepel's (more ecumenical phrase, the "revenge of God."[3] Only a tiny but lethal

minority has been inspired to action by such interpretations. The al-Qa'ida "theology" is basically an update of that of the Egyptian Islamic Jihad, best known for its assassination of Anwar al-Sadat in 1981. Some elements of the al-Qa'ida message, including that of injustices perpetrated against the worldwide Islamic community—in Palestine, Chechnya, Kashmir, and elsewhere—capture the imagination of wider numbers of people, although their accord with some elements of the al-Qa'ida view of world politics and repression by state authorities does not get translated into action.

Several years ago I entitled an article "Inside the Islamic Reformation."[4] It emphasized the circumstances and potential of voices and practices in the Muslim world that contribute to more open societies and religious interpretations. We must accept that there will always be ideas available to justify intolerance and violence, and there will also always be ways for terrorists to manipulate open societies for their own nefarious ends. Countering radical ideologies and theologies of violence is not easy. Yet the proliferation of voices arguing in open debate about the role of Islam in the modern world and in contemporary society contributes significantly to defusing terrorist appeals. Because the advocates of tolerance and mutual understanding in the Muslim world are already present for those prepared to read and listen to what they say. One Islamic thinker in the Arab Gulf, for example, argues that the incremental growth of democracy in America is the most appropriate model for Muslims to follow, and the Syrian Muhammad Shahrur argues in his many books and on satellite television in the Arab world for a rethinking of the Islamic tradition that breaks with the hold of the'ulama and of preachers on Qur'anic interpretation.[5] Thinkers and religious leaders, such as Turkey's Fethullah Gulen and Indonesia's Nurcholish Madjid, concur that democracy and Islam are fully compatible and that Islam prescribes no particular form of governance—and certainly not arbitrary rule. They argue that the central Qur'anic message is that Muslims must take responsibility for their own society. Even the headscarf is not essential, only the requirement of modest dress and comportment. The view of such thinkers—and there are many—are less well known outside of the Arab world than, for instance, the views of Solidarity activists in Poland or the advocates of liberation theology. Even if challenged by much less tolerant views from what is sometimes called the "street," the courage of those who advocate toleration, or who practice it without articulating their views in public, merits more attention than it has received to date. These thinkers

recognize that there are many religious-based differences between Islam and the West, but they also recognize many powerful points in common.

*** Modern Transnational Videos

In the years ahead, open communications and public diplomacy will play an increasingly significant role in countering the image that the al-Qa'ida terrorist network and Osama bin Laden assert for themselves as guardians of Islamic values. In the fight against terrorism for which bin Laden is the photogenic icon, the first step is to recognize that he is as thoroughly a part of the modern world as was Cambodia's French-educated Pol Pot. Bin Laden's videotaped presentation of self intends to convey a traditional Islamic warrior brought up-to-date, but this sense of the past is an invented one. The language and content of his videotaped appeals convey more of his participation in the modern world than his camouflage jacket, Kalashnikov, and Timex watch.

Take the two-hour al-Qa'ida recruitment videotape in Arabic that has made its way to many Middle Eastern video shops and Western news media.[6] It is a skillful production, as fastpaced and gripping as any Hindu fundamentalist video justifying the destruction in 1992 of the Ayodhya mosque in India,[7] or the political attack videos so heavily used in American presidential campaigning. The 1988 "Willie Horton" campaign video of Republican presidential candidate George H. W. Bush—in which an off-screen announcer portrayed Democratic presidential candidate Michael Dukakis as "soft" on crime while showing a mug shot of a convicted African-American rapist who had committed a second rape during a weekend furlough from a Massachusetts prison—was a propaganda masterpiece that combined an explicit although conventional message with a menacing underlying one intended to motivate undecided voters. The al-Qa'ida video, directed at a different audience—presumably alienated Arab youth, unemployed and often living in desperate conditions—shows an equal mastery of modern propaganda.

The al-Qa'ida producers could have graduated from one of the best film schools in the United States or Europe. The fast-moving recruitment video

begins with the sinking of the USS Cole in Yemen, but then shows a montage implying a seemingly coordinated worldwide aggression against Muslims in Palestine, Jerusalem, Lebanon, Chechnya, Kashmir, and Indonesia (but not Muslim violence against Christians and Chinese in the last). It also shows United States generals received by Saudi princes, intimating the collusion of local regimes with the West and challenging the legitimacy of many regimes, including Saudi Arabia. The sufferings of the Iraqi people are attributed to American brutality against Muslims, and Saddam Hussein is assimilated to the category of infidel ruler.

Many of the images are taken from the daily staple of Western video news—the BBC and CNN logos add to the videos' authenticity, just as Qatar's al-Jazeera Satellite Television logo rebroadcast by CNN and the BBC has added authenticity to Western coverage of Osama bin Laden.

Alternating with these scenes of devastation and oppression of Muslims are images of Osama bin Laden: posing in front of bookshelves or seated on the ground like a religious scholar, holding the Qur'an in his hand. Bin Laden radiates charismatic authority and control as he narrates the Prophet Muhammad's flight from Mecca to Medina, when the early Islamic movement was threatened by the idolaters, but returned to conquer them. This allusion is repeatedly invoked in the video. Bin Laden also stresses the need for a jihad, or struggle for the cause of Islam, against the "crusaders" and "Zionists." Later images show military training in Afghanistan (including target practice at a video of Bill Clinton projected against a wall), and a final sequence—the word "solution" flashes across the screen—portrays an Israeli soldier in full riot gear retreating from a Palestinian boy throwing stones, and a Qur'anic recitation.

*** A Thoroughly Modern Fanatic

Osama bin Laden, like many of his associates, is thoroughly imbued with the values of the modern world, even if only to reject them. A 1971 photograph shows him on family holiday in Oxford at the age of 14, posing with two of his half-brothers and Spanish girls their own age. English was their common language of communication. Bin Laden studied English at a private school in

Jidda, and English was also useful for his civil engineering courses at Jidda's King Abdul Aziz University. Unlike many of his estranged half-brothers, educated both in Saudi Arabia and in Europe and the United States, Osama's education was only in Saudi Arabia, but he was also familiar with Arab and European society.

The organizational skills he learned in Saudi Arabia came in to play when he joined the mujahidin (striver, or holy war) struggle against the 1979 Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. He may not have directly met United States intelligence officers in the field, but they, like their Saudi and Pakistani counterparts, were delighted to have him participate in their fight against Soviet troops and recruit willing fighters from throughout the Arab world. Likewise, his many business enterprises flourished under highly adverse conditions. Bin Laden skillfully sustained a flexible multinational organization in the face of enemies, especially state authorities, moving cash, people, and supplies almost undetected across international frontiers. His skills were far superior to those of Colombia's narco-traffickers.

Western policy makers and intelligence professionals have never underestimated the organizational skills of bin Laden and his associates. Neither should be their skills in conveying a message that appeals to some Muslims. Bin Laden lacks the credentials of an established Islamic scholar, but this does not diminish his appeal. As Sudan's Sorbonne-educated Hasan al-Turabi, leader of his country's Muslim Brotherhood and its former attorney-general and speaker of the parliament, explained two decades ago, "Because all knowledge is divine and religious, a chemist, an engineer, an economist, or a jurist" are all men of learning.[8] Civil engineer bin Laden exemplifies Turabi's point. His audience judges him not by his ability to cite authoritative texts, but by his apparent skill in applying generally accepted religious tenets to current political and social issues.

*** The Message on the Arab "Street"

Bin Laden's lectures circulate in book form in the Arab world, but video is the main vehicle of communication. The use of CNN-like "zippers"—the ribbons of words that stream beneath the images in many newscasts and

documentaries—shows that al-Qa'ida takes the Arab world's rising levels of education for granted. Increasingly, this audience is also saturated with both conventional media and new media, such as the Internet.[9] The Middle East has entered an era of mass education and this also implies an Arabic lingua franca. In Morocco in the early 1970s, rural people sometimes asked me to "translate" newscasts the standard transnational Arabic of the state radio into colloquial Arabic. Today this is no longer required. Mass education and new communications technologies enables large numbers of Arabs to hear—and see—al-Qa'ida's message directly.

Bin Laden's message does not depend on religious themes alone. Like the Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, his message contains many secular elements. Khomeini often alluded to the "wretched of the earth." At least for a time, his language appealed equally to Iran's religiously minded and to the secular left. For bin Laden, the equivalent themes are the oppression and corruption of many Arab governments, and he lays the blame for the violence and oppression in Palestine, Kashmir, Chechnya, and elsewhere at the door of the West. One need not be religious to rally to some of these themes. A poll taken in Morocco in late September 2001 showed that a majority of Moroccans condemned the September 11 bombings, but 41 percent sympathized with bin Laden's message.[10] An early October 2001 poll of Muslims in Britain showed similar results.

Osama bin Laden and the al-Qa'ida terrorist movement are thus reaching at least part of the Arab "street." Without advocating any specific policy initiatives, Director of Central Intelligence George J. Tenet testified before the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence in February 2001 that "the right catalyst—such as the outbreak of Israeli-Palestinian violence—can move people to act. Through access to the Internet and other means of communication, a restive public is increasingly capable of taking action without any identifiable leadership or organizational structure."[11]

Because many governments in the Middle East are deeply suspicious of an open press, nongovernmental organizations, and open expression, it is no surprise that the "restive" public, increasingly educated and influenced by hard-to-censor new media, can take action "without any identifiable leadership or organized structure." This does not mean an absence of

leadership, but of leadership identifiable to governments that have often lost the confidence of many social elements. The Middle East in general has a democracy deficit, in which “unauthorized” leaders or critics, such as Egyptian academic Saad Eddin Ibrahim—founder and director of Cairo’s Ibn Khaldoun Center for Development Studies—a nongovernmental organization that promotes democracy in Egypt—suffer harassment or prison terms.

One consequence of this democracy deficit is to magnify the power of the street in the Arab world. Bin Laden speaks in the vivid language of popular Islamic preachers, and builds on a deep and widespread resentment against the West and local ruling elites identified with it. The lack of formal outlets to express opinion on public concerns has created the democracy deficit in much of the Arab world, and this makes it easier for terrorists such as bin Laden, asserting that they act in the name of religion, to hijack the Arab street.

The immediate response is to learn to speak directly to the Arab street. This task has already begun. Obscure to all except specialists until September 11, Qatar’s al-Jazeera satellite television is a premier source in the Arab world for uncensored news and opinion. It is more, however, than the Arab equivalent of CNN. Uncensored news and opinions increasingly shape “public opinion”—a term without the pejorative overtones of “the street”—even in places like Damascus and Algiers. This public opinion in turn pushes Arab governments to be more responsive to their citizens, or at least to say that they are.

Rather than seek to censor al-Jazeera, limit al-Qa’ida’s access to the Western media, or create a de facto Office of Disinformation within the Pentagon—an unfortunate first response of the United States government after the September terror attacks—we should avoid censorship. Al-Qa’ida statements should be treated with the same caution as any other news source. Replacing Sinn Fein leader Gerry Adams’ voice and image in the British media in the 1980s with an Irish-accented actor appearing in silhouette only highlighted what he had to say, and it is unlikely that the British public would tolerate the same restrictions on the media today.

Ironically, at almost the same time that national security adviser Condoleezza Rice asked the American television networks not to air al-Qa'ida videos unedited, a former senior CIA officer, Graham Fuller, was explaining in Arabic on al-Jazeera how United States policymaking works. His appearance on al-Jazeera made a significant impact, as did Secretary of State Colin Powell's presence on a later al-Jazeera program and former United States Ambassador Christopher Ross, who speaks fluent Arabic. Likewise, the timing and content of British Prime Minister Tony Blair's response to an earlier bin Laden tape suggests how to take the emerging Arab public seriously. The day after al-Jazeera broadcast the bin Laden tape, Blair asked for and received an opportunity to respond. In his reply, Blair—in a first for a Western leader—directly addressed the Arab public through the Arab media, explaining coalition goals in attacking al-Qa'ida and the Taliban and challenging bin Laden's claim to speak in the name of Islam.

*** Putting Public Diplomacy to Work

Such appearances enhance the West's ability to communicate the primary message: that the war against terrorism is not that of one civilization against another, but against terrorism and fanaticism in all societies. Western policies and actions are subject to public scrutiny and will often be misunderstood. Public diplomacy can significantly diminish this misapprehension. It may, however, involve some uncomfortable policy decisions. For instance, America may be forced to exert more diplomatic pressure on Israel to alter its methods of dealing with Palestinians.

Western public diplomacy in the Middle East also involves uncharted waters. As an Oxford University social linguist, Clive Holes, has pointed out, the linguistic genius who thought up the first name for the campaign to oust the Taliban, "Operation Infinite Justice," did a major disservice to the Western goal. The expression was literally and accurately translated into Arabic as 'adala ghayr mutanahiya, implying that an earthly power arrogated to itself the task of divine retribution. Likewise, President George W. Bush's inadvertent and unscripted use of the word "crusade" gave al-Qa'ida spokesmen—and many others—an opportunity to attack Bush and Western intentions.

Mistakes will be made, but information and arguments that reach the Arab public sphere, including on al-Jazeera, will eventually have an impact. Some Westerners might condemn al-Jazeera as biased, and it may well be in terms of making assumptions about its audience. However, it has broken a taboo by regularly inviting official Israeli spokespersons to comment live on current issues. Muslim religious scholars, both in the Middle East and in the West, have already spoken out against al-Qa'ida's claim to act in the name of Islam. Other courageous voices, such as Egyptian playwright Ali Salem, have even employed humor for the same purpose.[12]

We must recognize that the best way to mitigate the continuing threat of terrorism is to encourage Middle Eastern states to be more responsive to participatory demands, and to aid local nongovernmental organizations working toward this goal. As with the case of Egypt's Saad Eddin Ibrahim, some countries may see such activities as subversive. Whether Arab states like it or not, increasing levels of education, greater ease of travel, and the rise of new communications media are turning the Arab street into a public sphere in which greater numbers of people, and not just a political and economic elite, will have a say in governance and public issues.

*** Notes

Parts of this essay appeared in an earlier form in Dale F. Eickelman, "Bin Laden, the Arab 'Street,' and the Middle East's Democracy Deficit," Current History 101, no. 651 (January 2002), pp. 36–39, and are used here with permission.

[1] Edward S. Walker, "The New US Administration's Middle East Policy Speech," Middle East Economic Survey, vol. 44, no. 26 (June 25, 2001). Available at [[http://www.mees.com/news/a44n26d01.htm] [http://www.mees.com/news/a44n26d01.htm]].

[2] I am grateful to James Piscatori for generously sharing with me an unpublished paper in progress concerning the Bin Laden/al-Qa‘ida view of world politics.

[3] Gilles Kepel, La Revanche de dieu: Chretiens, juifs et musulmans a la reconquete du monde (Paris: Seuil, 1991).

[4] Dale F. Eickelman, “Inside the Islamic Reformation,” Wilson Quarterly 22, no. 1 (Winter 1998), 80–89.

[5] Sadek J. Sulaiman, “Democracy and Shura,” in Liberal Islam: A Sourcebook, ed. Charles Kurzman (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), pp. 96–98. For a brief introduction to the thinking of Muhammad Shahrur, see Dale F. Eickelman, “Islamic Liberalism Strikes Back, “Middle East Studies Association Bulletin 27, no. 2 (December 1993), 163–68. See also Muhammad Shahrur, Proposal for an Islamic Covenant, translated by Dale F. Eickelman and Ismail S. Abu-Shehadeh (Damascus, Syria: al-Ahali Printing and Distribution, 2000), also available at [[http://www.islam21.net/pages/charter/may-1.htm][http://www.islam21.net/pages/charter/may-1.htm]].

[6] It is now available on-line with explanatory notes in English. See [[http://www.ciaonet.org/cbr/cbr00/video/excerpts/excerpts_index.html] [http://www.ciaonet.org/cbr/cbr00/video/excerpts/excerpts index.html]].

[7] See, for example, the Hindi-language film, “Pranh jha hu vachnu na jaye” (We can give up our lives, but we can’t break our vow), 55 minutes, Delhi,

Jain Studios, 1992. I am grateful to Dr. Christiane Brosnius, European University Viadrina, Frankfurt/Oder, for providing me with a translation and annotated story board for the video.

[8] Hasan al-Turabi, “The Islamic State,” in Voices of Resurgent Islam, ed. John L. Esposito (New York: Oxford University Press, 1983), p. 245.

[9] On the importance of rising levels of education and the new media, see Dale F. Eickelman, “The Coming Transformation in the Muslim World,” Current History 99, no. 633 (January 2000), pp. 16–20.

[10] Cited in Le Journal Hebdomadaire (Casablanca), October 13–19, 2001, p. 6.

[11] George J. Tenet, “Worldwide Threat 2001: National security in a changing World,” testimony before the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, February 7, 2001. See [[http://www.cia.gov/cia/public_affairs/speeches/archives/2001/UNCLASWWT_02072001.html][http://www.cia.gov/cia/public affairs/speeches/archives/2001/UNCLASWWT 02072001.html]] .

[12] Ali Salem, “I Want to Start a Kindergarten for Extremism,” al-Hayat (London), November 5, 2001. This is translated into English by the Middle East Media Research Institute as Special Dispatch no. 298, Jihad and Terrorism Studies, November 8, 2001, at [[https://www.memri.org][https://www.memri.org]].

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of words that stream beneath the images in many newscasts and documentaries—shows that Al Qaeda takes the Arab worlds rising levels of education for granted. Increasingly this audience is also saturated with both conventional media and new media, such as the Internet.[3] The Middle East has entered an era of mass education and this also implies an Arabic lingua franca. In Morocco in the early 1970s, rural people sometimes asked me to “translate” newscasts from the standard transnational Arabic of the state radio into colloquial Arabic. Today this is no longer required. Mass education and new communications technologies enable large numbers of Arabs to hear—and see— Al Qaeda’s message directly

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Osama bin Laden and the Al Qaeda terrorist movement are thus reaching at least part of the Arab “street. ” Earlier this year, before the September terrorist attacks, United States policymakers considered this “street” a “new phenomenon of public accountability, which we have seldom had to factor into our projections of Arab behavior in the past. The information revolution, and particularly the daily dose of uncensored television coming out of local TV stations like al-Jazeera and international coverage by CNN and others, is shaping public opinion, which, in turn, is pushing Arab governments to respond. We don’t know, and the leaders themselves don’t know, how that pressure will impact on Arab policy in the future.”[4]

Director of Central Intelligence George J. Tenet was even more cautionary on the nature of the “Arab street.” In testimony before the Senate Select

Committee on Intelligence in February 2001, he explained that the “right catalyst—such as the outbreak of Israeli-Palestinian violence—can move people to act. Through access to the Internet and other means of communication, a restive public is increasingly capable of taking action without any identifiable leadership or organizational structure.”

Because many governments in the Middle East are deeply suspicious of an open press, nongovernmental organizations, and open expression, it is no surprise that the “restive” public, increasingly educated and influenced by hard-to-censor new media, can take action “without any identifiable leadership or organized structure. ” The Middle East in general has a democracy deficit, in which “unauthorized” leaders or critics, such as Egyptian academic Saad Eddin Ibrahim—founder and director of the Ibn Khaldun Center for Development Studies, a nongovernmental organization that promotes democracy in Egypt—suffer harassment or prison terms.

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The immediate response is to learn to speak directly to this street. This task has already begun. Obscure to all except specialists until September 11, Qatar’s al-Jazeera satellite television is a premier source in the Arab world for uncensored news and opinion. It is more, however, than the Arab equivalent of CNN. Uncensored news and opinions increasingly shape “public opinion”—a term without the pejorative overtones of “the street”—even in places like Damascus and Algiers. This public opinion in turn pushes Arab governments to be more responsive to their citizens, or at least to say that they are.

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government after the September terror attacks—we should avoid censorship. Al Qaeda statements should be treated with the same caution as any other news source. Replacing Sinn Fein leader Gerry Adams' voice and image in the British media in the 1980s with an Irish-accented actor appearing in silhouette only highlighted what he had to say, and it is unlikely that the British public would tolerate the same restrictions on the media today.

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Dale F Eickelman is Ralph and Richard Lazarus Professor of Anthropology and Human Relations at Dartmouth College. His most recent book is The Middle East and Central Asia: An Anthropological Approach, 4 th ed. (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 2002). An earlier version of this article appeared as

“The West Should Speak to the Arab in the Street,” Daily Telegraph (London), October 27, 2001.

[1] It is now available on-line with explanatory notes in English. See <[[http://www.ciaonet.org/cbr/cbr00/video/excerpts/excerpts_index.html] [http://www.ciaonet.org/cbr/cbr00/video/excerpts/excerpts_index.html]]>.

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[3] On the importance of rising levels of education and the new media, see Dale F Eickelman, “The Coming Transformation in the Muslim World,” Current History, January 2000.

[4] Edward S. Walker, “The New US Administration’s Middle East Policy Speech,” Middle East Economic Survey vol. 44, no. 26 (June 25, 2001). Available at <[[http://www.mees.com/news/a44n26d01.htm][http://www.mees.com/news/a44n26d01.htm]]>.

[5] See his article in Arabic, “I Want to Start a Kindergarten for Extremism,” Al-Hayat (London), November 5, 2001. This is translated into English by the Middle East Media Research Institute as Special Dispatch no. 298, Jihad and Terrorism Studies, November 8, 2001, at <[[https://www.memri.org][https://www.memri.org]]>.

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Even before the events of 11 September 2001, it was already becoming clear that rapidly increasing levels of education, greater ease of travel, and the rise of new communications media were developing a public sphere in Muslim-majority societies in which large numbers of people—not just an educated, political, and economic elite—expect a say in religion, governance, and public issues.

State authorities continue in many ways to be arbitrary and restrict what is said in the press, the broadcast media, and in public, but the methods of avoiding such censorship and control have rapidly proliferated. Today, silence in public no longer implies ignorance.

Silence, or apparent acquiescence, is often a weapon of the weak. In some countries of the Arabian Peninsula, a “politics of silence,” in which audiences applaud tepidly rather than with enthusiasm, is one of the few forms of public protest available, despite the simulacra of democratic forms offered by repressive and authoritarian governments.[1] For instance, Tunisia’s President Zine el-Abidine Ben Ali was reelected with 99 percent of cast ballots in 1994, but few Tunisians would take at face value his response to a French journalist’s question that such results, far from being “a bit too good,” merely reflected “the profound realities of the Arab-Muslim world” and that the vote was “a massive adhesion to a project of national salvation.”[2] Public silence in Tunisia in the face of such claims does not equal agreement with them.

Washington policy makers recognized the implications of this new sense of the public in the Arab world well before the 11 September terrorist attacks. Among them, it is called the “Arab street,”

a new phenomenon of public accountability, which we have seldom had to factor into our projections of Arab behavior in the past. The information revolution, and particularly the daily dose of uncensored television coming out of local TV stations like al-Jazira and international coverage by CNN and others, is shaping public opinion, which, in turn, is pushing Arab governments to respond. We do not know, and the leaders themselves do not know, how that pressure will impact on Arab policy in the future.[3]

The use of the term “street,” rather than “public sphere” or “public,” imputes passivity, or a propensity to easy manipulation, and implies a lack of formal or informal leadership. Nonetheless, its use indicates that policy makers at

least acknowledge that even regional authoritarian and single-party states now have “publics” to take into account.

*** Being Muslim and Modern

The spread of higher education, greater mobility, and proliferating and accessible means of communication have contributed significantly to the fragmentation of religious and political authority, challenging authoritarianism in many domains.[4] This process could lead to more open societies, just as globalization has been accompanied by such developments as Vatican II and secular human rights movements. Many movements show the positive side of globalization, in which small but determined transnational groups work toward goals that improve the human condition. The leaders of such movements in the Arab and the Muslim-majority worlds, including interpreters of religious matters, often lack theological and philosophical sophistication. Some can, however, motivate minorities and at least persuade wider publics of the justice of their causes, changing implicit, practical understandings of ethical issues in the process.

There is also a darker side to globalization. The fragmentation of authority and the growing ability of large numbers of people to participate in wider spheres of religious and political debate and practical action can also have highly negative outcomes. This darker side is epitomized by Osama Bin Laden and the al-Qa‘ida terrorist movement. This organization is not noted primarily for its theological sophistication. In quality of thought, Bin Laden and his associates, such as the Egyptian physician Ayman al-Zawahiri, are no match for Thomas Hobbes, Martin Heidegger, Egypt’s (and Qatar’s) Yusuf al-Qaradawi, or Syria’s Muhammad Shahrur. Al-Qa‘ida has, nonetheless, demonstrated a public

relations genius that—combined with massive and dramatic terrorist acts—caught the world by surprise and reinforced its public declarations of anti-Western sentiments.

The Bin Laden/al-Qa‘ida view of world politics gains its power and timelessness by appealing to unity and faith regardless of the balance of

power against them, and by attributing the evils of this world to Christians and Jews, as well as to Muslims who associate with them (and thus subvert the goals of the umma, the worldwide community of true believers). Does not the Qur’an say that polytheists should be fought until they cease to exist (Q. 9:5) and that those who do not rule by God’s law are unbelievers who, by implication, should be resisted (Q. 5:44)?[5]

These interpretations of scripture are highly contestable and should not be taken as harbingers of a coming “clash of civilizations” or as, in Gilles Kepel’s (more ecumenical) phrase, the “revenge of God.”[6] This “theology” does not go back to ancient roots or to the Qur’an, although some extremists make such claims, but is thoroughly modern; it is basically an update of the beliefs of Islamic Jihad, an Egyptian group best known for its assassination of Anwar al-Sadat in 1981. Only a tiny minority has been inspired to lethal action by such interpretations. However, that minority builds on a hybrid social base that can bring together the totally different worlds of “uneducated Pashtun villagers and rich Arab city dwellers.”[7] Some elements of the al-Qa‘ida message—especially accounts of injustices perpetrated against Muslims in Palestine, Chechnya, Kashmir, and elsewhere—capture the imagination of broad circles, although their agreement does not translate into action.

Many voices and practices in the Muslim world call for or tend toward more open societies and diverse religious interpretations.[8] Even if ignored because they are not heard in English or the major European languages, they are becoming more significant. However, cautious autocracies are hesitant to contest directly the advocates of fanaticism and intolerance. There will always be ideas at hand to justify intolerance and violence, and there will also always be ways for terrorists to manipulate open societies for their nefarious ends; countering radical ideologies and theologies of violence is not easy. Yet the proliferation of voices openly debating the role of Islam in contemporary society contributes significantly to weakening the appeal of terrorists.

One Islamic thinker in the Gulf region, for example, argues that the principle of equality as a foundational idea was firmly established in the U.S. Declaration of Independence in 1776 but that the implementation of the principle took nearly two centuries to achieve. The right for free men to vote

on an equal basis was granted only in 1850, and African-American males got the right to vote in 1870. Women got the right to vote in 1920, and the poll tax was eliminated only in 1964. He sees the Islamic principle of shura, or consultation, as identical to democracy and as an idea that can only be achieved incrementally and never fully realized, as in the American case.[9] In a similar manner, Syria's Muhammad Shahrur, in his many books and on satellite television, calls for a rethinking of the Islamic tradition to break the hold of the 'ulama ("the body of learned men"—that is, canonical religious authorities) and popular preachers on Qur'anic interpretation.[10]

Thinkers and religious leaders like Turkey's Fethullah Gulen and Indonesia's Nurcholish Madjid hold that democracy and Islam are fully compatible and that Islam prescribes no particular form of governance, certainly not arbitrary rule. They argue that the central Qur'anic message is that Muslims must take responsibility for their own society. Even the headscarf is not essential, Gulen argues—taking up a theme as politically explosive in Turkey as it is in France—only the requirement of modest dress and comportment. The views of such thinkers (and there are many) are less well known outside the Arab and Muslim-majority world than, for instance, once were the views of Solidarity activists in Poland or the advocates of liberation theology. The courage of those in the Islamic world who advocate toleration, even those who practice it in private without articulating their views, is remarkable. These thinkers recognize that there are many religious differences between Islam and the West, but they also acknowledge many important points in common.

*** Modern Transnational Videos

In the years ahead, open communication and public diplomacy will be increasingly significant in countering the image that the likes of the al-Qa'ida terrorist network and Osama Bin Laden assert for themselves as "guardians of Islamic values." Al-Qa'ida itself may fade from prominence, but the views it advocates resonate within the Muslim-majority world and have parallels outside it. In the fight against terrorism, of which Bin Laden is the photogenic icon, the first step is to recognize that he is as thoroughly a part of the modern world as was Cambodia's French-educated Pol Pot. Bin Laden presents himself as a traditional Islamic warrior brought up to date (though

the “tradition” is an invented one). The language and content of his videotaped appeals assert his modernity even more strongly, although less obviously, than do his camouflage jacket, Kalashnikov, and Timex watch.

Consider a two-hour al-Qa‘ida recruitment videotape in Arabic that has made its way since May 2000 to many Middle Eastern video shops and Western news media.[11] It is a skillful production, as fast-paced and gripping as any Hindu fundamentalist video justifying the destruction in 1992 of the Ayodhya mosque in India, or the political “attack videos” used in American presidential campaigning.[12] The 1988 “Willie Horton” campaign video—which showed a mug shot of a convicted rapist who had committed a second rape during a weekend furlough from a Massachusetts prison, while a voice-over portrayed Democratic presidential candidate Michael Dukakis as “soft” on crime—was a marketing masterpiece that combined a conventional, if explicit, message with another menacing, underlying one intended to galvanize undecided voters. The al-Qa‘ida video, although it was directed at a different audience—presumably Arab youth who are alienated, unemployed, and often living in desperate conditions—shows an equal mastery of modern propaganda.

The recruitment video begins with the attack on the USS Cole (DDG 67) in Yemen, then cuts to a montage implying coordinated worldwide aggression against Muslims in Palestine, Jerusalem, Lebanon, Chechnya, Kashmir, and Indonesia. Images follow of U.S. generals being received by Saudi princes, intimating collusion with the infidel West by leaders of oppressive Muslim regimes, thereby undermining their legitimacy. The tape continues by attributing the sufferings of the Iraqi people to American brutality against Muslims. Many of the images are taken from daily Western video news; the BBC and CNN logos add to their authenticity, just as the rebroadcast by CNN and the BBC of Qatar’s al-Jazeera satellite television logo has added authenticity to Western coverage of Bin Laden.

Alternating with these scenes of devastation and oppression are images of Osama Bin Laden—posing in front of bookshelves or seated on the ground like an Islamic religious scholar, holding in his hand the Qur’an. Radiating charismatic authority, he recounts the Prophet Muhammad’s flight from Mecca to Medina when the early Islamic movement was threatened by

idolaters, and his triumphant return; the analogy is repeatedly drawn. Bin Laden also stresses the need for a jihad, or struggle, for the cause of Islam against the “crusaders” and “Zionists.” Later images show military training in Afghanistan (including target practice at a video of Bill Clinton projected against a wall). A final sequence portrays—as the word “solution” flashes across the screen and a voice-over recites from the Qur’an—an Israeli soldier in full riot gear retreating from a Palestinian boy throwing stones.

*** A Thoroughly Modern Fanatic

Osama Bin Laden, like many of his associates, is imbued with not only the techniques but the values of the modern world, even if only to reject them. A 1971 photograph shows him at age fourteen on a family holiday in Oxford, in the United Kingdom, posing with two half-brothers and some Spanish girls their own age. English would have been their common language. Bin Laden had studied English at a private school in Jidda, and English was later useful for his civil engineering courses at King Abdul Aziz University. Unlike many of his now-estranged half-brothers, who were educated in Europe and the United States as well as in Saudi Arabia, Osama studied only in Saudi Arabia; nonetheless, he was familiar with European society.

Organizational skills he learned in the university came into play when he joined the mujahidin (“strugglers,” or holy warriors) against the 1979 Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. Whether or not he actually met American intelligence officers in the field, they, like their Saudi and Pakistani counterparts, were pleased at his participation and his willingness to recruit fighters from throughout the Arab world. Likewise, Bin Laden’s many business enterprises flourished, even under highly adverse conditions. In both settings, he skillfully sustained a flexible multinational organization in the face of opposition, moving cash, people, and supplies almost undetected across international frontiers.

If Western policy makers and intelligence professionals never underestimated the organizational effectiveness of Bin Laden and his associates, neither should they underestimate their ability to convey a message that appeals to

at least some Muslims. One need not have credentials as an established Islamic scholar in order to have one's ideas taken seriously. As Sudan's former attorney general and speaker of the parliament, the Sorbonne-educated Hasan al-Turabi (also leader of his country's Muslim Brotherhood), asserted two decades ago, "Because all knowledge is divine and religious, a chemist, an engineer, an economist, or a jurist" are all men of learning.[13] Bin Laden, a civil engineer, exemplifies Turabi's point. Some in his audience do not look for ability to cite authoritative texts; instead, they respond to his apparent skill in applying generally accepted religious tenets to current political and social issues.

*** The Message on the Arab Street

Bin Laden's lectures circulate in book form in the Arab world, but video is the main vehicle of communication. Mass education and new communications technologies enable large numbers of Arabs to hear—and see—al-Qa'ida's message directly. The use of CNN-like "zippers"—the ribbons of words streamed beneath images—shows that al-Qa'ida takes for granted rising levels of education. Increasingly, its audience has access to both conventional and new media, such as the Internet.[14] The entry of the Middle East into an era of mass communication has established standard Arabic (as opposed to its widely differing and often mutually incomprehensible regional dialects) as a lingua franca. In Morocco in the early 1970s, for instance, rural people might ask speakers of standard Arabic to "translate" newscasts in the transnational speech of the state radio into local, colloquial Arabic. Today this is no longer required.

Bin Laden's message does not depend on religious themes alone. Like that of the Ayatollah Ruholla Khomeini, his message contains many secular elements. Khomeini often alluded to the "wretched of the earth" and drew on images appealing to third-world militants in general. At least for a time, his language appealed equally to Iran's religiously minded sector and its secular Left. For Bin Laden, the equivalent themes are the oppression and corruption of many Arab governments, for which he lays the blame—as he does for violence and oppression in Palestine, Kashmir, Chechnya, and elsewhere—on the West. One need not be religious to rally to such themes. A poll taken in Morocco in late September 2001 showed that, though a majority of

Moroccans condemned the 11 September bombings, 41 percent sympathized with Bin Laden's message.[15] An early November 2001 poll of 11,500 Muslims in Britain showed that only 21 percent thought that the United States was justified in blaming al-Qa'ida for the attacks in America on 11 September and that 57 percent disagreed with Prime Minister Tony Blair when he claimed that the U.S. and British military action in Afghanistan was not an attack on Islam.[16]

Osama Bin Laden and the al-Qa'ida terrorist movement are thus reaching at least part of the Arab "street." The U.S. director of central intelligence, George J. Tenet, testified before the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence in February 2001 that "the right catalyst—such as the outbreak of Israeli-Palestinian violence—can move people to act. Through access to the Internet and other means of communication, a restive [Arab] public is increasingly capable of taking action without any identifiable leadership or organizational structure."[17]

*** Countering the Democracy Deficit

The Middle East in general has a democracy deficit, in which "unauthorized" leaders or critics such as Saad Eddin Ibrahim—founder and director of Cairo's Ibn Khaldoun Center for Development Studies, a nongovernmental organization that promotes democracy in Egypt—suffer harassment or prison terms. It is because many governments in the Middle East are deeply suspicious of an open press, nongovernmental organizations, and unrestricted expression that the "restive" public, increasingly educated and influenced by hard-to-censor new media, can take action. By "without any identifiable leadership or organizational structure" George Tenet meant an absence not of leadership altogether but of leadership detectable by governments that have lost the confidence of social elements. An emerging Palestinian leader, say, would be foolhardy to allow him or herself to become identifiable to Israeli or other intelligence services.

One consequence of this democracy deficit is to magnify the power of the "street" in the Arab world. Bin Laden, speaking in the vivid language of popular Islamic preachers, builds on a deep and widespread resentment of

the West and the local ruling elites associated with it. The lack of formal outlets for opinion on public concerns makes it easier for zealots, claiming the authority of religion, to hijack the Arab street.

One immediate response possible for the West is to acknowledge the existence of the Arab street and to learn to speak directly to it. This task has already begun, and an available point of access is al-Jazeera, which was obscure to all except specialists until 11 September 2001. This Qatari satellite television network is a premier source in the Arab world of uncensored news and opinion. It is more, however, than the Arab equivalent of CNN. Uncensored news and opinions increasingly shape public opinion even in places like Damascus and Algiers. Public opinion, in turn, pushes Arab governments to be more responsive to their citizens, or at least to say that they are.

Far from seeking to censor al-Jazeera, limit al-Qa‘ida’s access to the Western media, or create a de facto Office of Disinformation within the Pentagon—an unfortunate early proposal of the U.S. government after the September terror attacks—the United States should specifically avoid censorship. Al-Qa‘ida statements should be treated with the same caution as those of any other news source.

Ironically, at almost the same moment that national security adviser Condoleezza Rice asked the American television networks not to air al-Qa‘ida videos unedited, a former senior CIA officer, Graham Fuller, was explaining in Arabic on al-Jazeera how American policy making works. His appearance on al-Jazeera made a significant impact, as did Secretary of State Colin Powell’s presence on a later program and that of former U.S. ambassador Christopher Ross, who speaks fluent Arabic. Likewise, the timing and content of the response of Prime Minister Tony Blair of Britain to an earlier Bin Laden tape suggests how to take the emerging Arab public seriously. The day after al-Jazeera broadcast the Bin Laden tape, Blair asked for and received an opportunity to respond. In his reply, Blair—in a first for a Western leader—directly addressed the Arab public through the Arab media, explaining coalition goals in attacking al-Qa‘ida and the Taliban, and challenging Bin Laden’s claim to speak in the name of Islam.

Such appearances enhance the West's ability to communicate its primary message—that the war against terrorism is a struggle not of one civilization against another but against terrorism and fanaticism in all societies. Western policies and actions are subject to public scrutiny and are quite likely to be misunderstood, especially by people living under closed regimes or faced with apparent contradictory emphases in foreign policy and actions. U.S. government statements about the evil of the Iraqi regime are hard to explain to the Arab street when the American leadership appears unable or even unwilling to restrain Israeli incursions into the West Bank and Gaza. Public diplomacy can significantly diminish some misapprehensions, but it may also require some uncomfortable policy decisions. For instance, America may be forced to exert more diplomatic pressure on Israel to alter its methods of dealing with Palestinians.

Western public diplomacy in the Middle East also entails great care in uncharted waters. As an Oxford University social linguist, Clive Holes, has pointed out, the linguistic genius who thought up the original name for the campaign to oust the Taliban, "Operation INFINITE JUSTICE," did a major disservice to the Western goal. The expression was literally and accurately translated into Arabic as 'adala ghayr mutanahiya, connoting an earthly power arrogating to itself the task of divine retribution. Likewise, President George W. Bush's inadvertent and unscripted use of the word "crusade" gave al-Qa'ida spokesmen—and many others—an opportunity to attack the intentions of Bush and the West.

Mistakes will be made, but information and arguments that reach the Arab public sphere, including on al-Jazeera, will eventually have an impact for good or for ill. Some Westerners might condemn al-Jazeera as biased, and it may well be, in terms of the assumptions it makes about its audience. However, al-Jazeera has already broken a taboo by regularly inviting official Israeli spokespersons to comment live on current issues. Muslim religious scholars, both in the Middle East and in the West, have already spoken out on the network against al-Qa'ida's claim to act in the name of Islam. Other courageous voices, such as Egyptian playwright Ali Salem, have even employed humor for that purpose.[18]

The United States must recognize that the best way to mitigate the continuing threat of terrorism is to encourage Middle Eastern states to be much more responsive to longings for real participation in governance and to aid local nongovernmental organizations working toward this goal. As occurred in Egypt in the case of Saad Eddin Ibrahim, some countries may see such activities as subversive. Nonetheless, and whether Arab ruling elites like it or not, the Arab street is turning into a public sphere that will expect to be heard on public issues and matters of governance.

[1] Brigitte Waterdrinker, “Genese et construction d’un etat moderne: Le cas du Sultanate d’Oman,” Memoire de DEA Etudes Politiques (Paris: Institut d’Etudes Politiques de Paris, 1993).

[2] Zine el-Abidine Ben Ali, “ ‘Le integrisme, c’est maintenant votre probleme’: Interview with Jacques Jacquet-Francillon,” Figaro, 2 August 1994, p. 5. Author’s translation.

[3] Edward S. Walker, “The New U.S. Administration’s Middle East Policy Speech,” Middle

East Economic Survey, 25 June 2001, available on the World Wide Web at http:// [[http://www.mees.com/news/a44n26d01.htm] [www.mees.com/news/a44n26d01.htm]].

[4] See Dale F. Eickelman and Jon W. Anderson, “Redefining Muslim Publics,” in New Media in the Muslim World: The Emerging Public Sphere, ed. Dale F. Eickelman and Jon W. Anderson (Bloomington: Indiana Univ. Press, 1999), pp. 1–18; and see Dale F. Eickelman, “Mass Higher Education and the Religious Imagination in Contemporary Arab Societies,” American Ethnologist, November 1992, pp. 643–55.

[5] I am grateful to James Piscatori for generously sharing with me an unpublished paper in progress concerning the Bin Laden/ al-Qa‘ida view of world politics. Qur’anic citations (such as 9:5) refer to chapter (sura) and verse.

[6] Gilles Kepel, The Revenge of God: The Resurgence of Islam, Christianity, and Judaism in the Modern World, trans. Alan Braley (University Park: Pennsylvania State Univ. Press, 1994).

[7] Navid Kermani, “A Dynamite of the Spirit: Why Nietzsche, Not the Koran, is the Key to Understanding the Suicide Bombers,” Times Literary Supplement (London), 29 March 2002, p. 15.

[8] See Dale F. Eickelman, “Inside the Islamic Reformation,” Wilson Quarterly, Winter 1998, pp. 80–9.

[9] Sadek J. Sulaiman, “Democracy and Shura,” in Liberal Islam: A Sourcebook, ed. Charles Kurzman (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1998), p. 97.

[10] For an introduction to the thinking of Muhammad Shahrur, see Dale F. Eickelman, “Islamic Liberalism Strikes Back,” Middle East Studies Association Bulletin, December 1993, pp. 163–8. See also Muhammad Shahrur, Proposal for an Islamic Covenant, trans. Dale F. Eickelman and Ismail S. Abu-Shehadeh (Damascus: al-Ahali, 2000), also available online, at [[http://www.islam21.net/pages/][http://www.islam21.net/pages/]] charter/may-1.htm, or [[http://www.isim.nl/][http://www.isim.nl/]] newsletter/7/.

[11] It is now available online with explanatory notes in English. See [[http://www.ciaonet.org/][http://www.ciaonet.org/]] cbr/cbr00/video/excerpts/excerpts_index .html.

[12] See, for example, the Hindi-language film Pranh jha hu vachnu na jaye (We can give up our lives, but we cannot break our vow), fifty-five minutes, Delhi, Jain Studios, 1992. I am grateful to Dr. Christiane Brosius for providing me with a translation and annotated storyboard of the video. See also Christiane Brosius, “Is This the Real Thing? Packaging Cultural Nationalism,” in Image Journeys: Audio-Visual Media and Cultural Change in India, ed. Christiane Brosius and Melissa Butcher (New Delhi: Sage, 1999), pp. 99–136.

[13] Hasan al-Turabi, “The Islamic State,” in Voices of Resurgent Islam, ed. John L. Esposito (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1983), p. 245.

[14] On the importance of rising levels of education and the new media, see Dale F. Eickelman, “The Coming Transformation in the Muslim World,” Current History, January 2000, pp. 16–20.

[15] Cited in Le Journal Hebdomadaire (Casablanca), 13–19 October 2001, p. 6.

[16] Poll conducted by ICM Research for BBC 4, 2–11 November 2001. On the World Wide Web at [[http://www.bbc.co.uk/radio4/today/][http://www.bbc.co.uk/radio4/today/]] reports/features/muslimpoll.html.

[17] George J. Tenet, “Worldwide Threat 2001: National Security in a Changing World,” testimony before the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, 7 February 2001, available on the World Wide Web at [[http://www.cia.gov/][http://www.cia.gov/]] cia/public_affairs/speeches/archives/2001/ UNCLASWWT_02072001.html.

[18] Ali Salem, “I Want to Start a Kindergarten for Extremism,” al-Hayat (London), 5 November 2001. This was translated into English by the Middle East Media Research Institute as “Special Dispatch 298,” Jihad and Terrorism Studies, 8 November 2001, available online at [[https://www.memri.org][https://www.memri.org]].

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Far from being immutable, humanity is in fact involved in an interminable process of evolution, disintegration and reconstruction; far from being a unity, it is in fact infinite in its variety, with regard to both time and place. Nor do I mean simply that external forms of life vary.... Rather I mean that the fundamental substance of [men's] way of conceiving the world and conducting themselves in it is in a constant state of flux, which itself varies from place to place (Durkheim 1977: 324).

The study of education can be to complex societies what the study of religion has been to societies variously characterized by anthropologists as 'simple,' 'cold' or 'elementary.' Recognizing this potential, sociologists and social anthropologists have recently indicated a renewed interest in the study of how schooling, especially higher education, implicitly defines and transmits a culturally valued cognitive style, 'a set of basic, deeply interiorized master-patterns' of language and thought on the basis of which other patterns are subsequently acquired (Bourdieu 1967: 343; see also Cole, Gay, Glick and Sharp 1971). To place such a concern in the context of more traditional anthropological interests, Bourdieu compares the cognitive style implicitly learned at the Sorbonne to that transmitted by Bororo elders. He sees the verbal manoeuvres learned by students in preparing for the le$on at the Sorbonne as furnishing 'a model of the "right" mode of intellectual activity' for the French context. The dualistic method of the le$on, in which the traditional 'two views' on any subject are established, is subsequently applied to the discussion of a wide range of intellectual problems to the exclusion of alternative, less culturally valued approaches. Bourdieu compares this cognitive style to Bororo cosmology as interpreted by their dominant elders to form the pattern for the dualistic spatial layout of their villages and the distribution of their houses (Bourdieu 1967: 338–39, 350).

Bourdieu characterizes the cognitive style learned at the Sorbonne and that of Bororo elders to be equally 'formal and fictitious' (1967: 339). His use of these terms carries significant implications for one of the principal problems

of the sociology of knowledge, that of how symbolic representations of the world are related to the social order. For Bourdieu, there is no inherent relation between a specific pattern of thought and the social contexts in which it is found. Each may be in a significant tension with the other, but never fully congruent. This notion of ‘fictitiousness’ stands in sharp contrast to an anthropological tradition, still very much alive, which presumes a direct, one-to-one correlation between ideology and social action (e.g., Durkheim 1915; Mauss 1966; Evans-Pritchard 1940; Lienhardt 1967; Douglas 1973).

However questionable such an assumption of correspondence may be when applied to ‘simple’ societies, it is decidedly inadequate when applied to those which are complex, internally differentiated and historically known (Eickelman 1977a,b). Emile Durkheim clearly recognized this in his largely neglected Evolution of Educational Thought (1977), which is why I refer to a renewed interest in the study of education. Durkheim’s other, more widely known studies on education stress primarily its integrative, or ‘correspondence’ aspects. The analysis in Evolution, in contrast, suggests a ‘nether’ side of Durkheim’s thought which has been largely ignored until recently because it was out of step with prevailing sociological currents (Cherkaoui 1976).[1] Durkheim argues in this study that changes in ideas of knowledge in complex societies and the means by which such ideas are transmitted result from continual struggles among competing groups within society, each of which seeks domination or influence. Durkheim considered educational systems, like other social institutions, to be tied to prevailing social structures, but did not regard such ties as determinate. Thus the forms of knowledge shaped and conveyed in educational systems are partially autonomous and must be considered in relation to the social distribution of power. Such assumptions have only recently been taken up in the study of specific educational systems (e.g., Bourdieu 1973; Bourdieu and Passeron 1977; Young 1971; Bernstein 1977: 174–200; Colonna 1975).

The purpose of this article is to explore the alternatives to ‘correspondence’ theory through the description and analysis of the cognitive style of Islamic learning, the institutions of higher learning, and the social context of both, as they existed in Marrakesh in the 1920s and 1930s, just before the effective collapse of traditional educational institutions there. The relatively sudden

decline of traditional higher learning in Morocco during this period makes it a particularly appropriate setting for considering the specific, and variable, links between concepts of knowledge, the institutional context in which such concepts are conveyed, and the adaptation to change of each of these elements. In particular, Islamic education as practiced in Morocco was in some ways intermediate between oral and written systems of transmission of knowledge. Its key treatises existed in written form but were conveyed orally, to be written down and memorized by students. This article considers how the ‘intellectual technology,’ or forms of transmission of knowledge available in a society shape and accommodate social and cultural change. By so doing, ways are suggested further to refine the debate over the ‘great divide’ in modes of thought, or cognitive styles, between societies which possess systems of writing and those which do not (Goody 1968, 1977).

A complementary goal, one which I hope justifies the ‘thick’ description (Geertz 1973) in which my argument is necessarily presented, is to place the comparative study of higher education in a broader context than that of Europe and North America, the locus of most such studies (e.g., Stone 1974). With the expansion of European hegemony over most of the world in the last two centuries, non-Western institutions of higher learning have tended to collapse or to be eclipsed by their Western-based counterparts, so that comparative studies dealing with non-European institutional forms have necessarily been relegated to social historical analyses (e.g., Weber 1958: 416 44; Wilkinson 1964, 1969; Dore 1965). The study presented here is no exception, but because it deals with a relatively recent period it has been possible to complement printed and manuscript sources with intensive interviews of persons in the milieu of traditional learning in the 1920s and 1930s. These interviews have been especially important in the Islamic context. The principal written sources, including teaching licenses (ijdza-s) and traditional biographies and autobiographies of men of learning, follow highly stylized conventions which themselves are a product of Islamic education. These conventions severely limit the information which such sources convey concerning how the eductional process actually worked, no matter how thorough their analysis (e.g., Makdisi 1961).

*** Islamic Education: Recent Political and Historical Contexts

Although the exact timing of decisive European influence has varied, traditional Islamic education had been drastically altered in most regions from the time of Bonaparte’s invasion of Egypt in 1798. For this reason it is important to specify the historical context in which such education is described. In some cases, such as Algeria, the colonial power deliberately destroyed the financial base of Islamic education so that by the 1880s all that remained of higher education was a few schools of poor quality. Because the graduates of such schools were ill prepared to assume positions of significance in colonial Algerian society, Islamic education was increasingly regarded by Algerian Muslims themselves as inferior to that provided by the French in official colonial schools (Colonna 1975).

In other countries Islamic education was not so directly undermined in the nineteenth century. Yet the establishment of European-style institutions, at first only for specialized military training but rapidly expanding in scope, had an equivalent detrimental impact. Such schools quickly attracted students of the more privileged social strata and other more ambitious students, generally leaving Islamic schools to those of a modest and rural origin (e.g., Reid 1977: 351,357). To meet the threat of Europeanstyle institutions, many centers of Islamic learning were compelled to introduce such Western devices as formal curricula, new subjects, entrance and course examinations, formally appointed faculties, and budgets subject to external governmental control. Such ‘organization’ (nizdm)—use of terms implying ‘reform’ was deliberately avoided—was imposed upon the famous Azhar mosque-university of Cairo between 1872 and 1896 (Arminjon 1907: 13–48; Heyworth-Dunne 1968: 395–405). Earlier in the century, as a means of weakening the political strength of Islamic men of learning (dlim; pl. ‘ulamcT) in Egypt, the revenues from pious endowments upon which Islamic education depended had already been undermined (Hourani 1970: 52). Consequently, descriptions of ‘reformed’ institutions cannot be taken as reliable indicators of the nature of Islamic education prior to ‘organization’ or ‘modernization,’ although such studies provide significant insight into the contradictions involved in attempts at reform (e.g., Fischer 1976).

In contrast, until recently Islamic education in Morocco survived relatively intact. The ‘organization’ of the Qarawiyin mosque-university in Fez occurred under French auspices in 1931 while the counterpart of the Qarawiyin in Marrakesh, the YusufTya mosque-university, was only subject to ‘organization’ in 1939.[2] Moreover, those few Moroccan students sent to Europe in the nineteenth century returned to find themselves largely ignored and isolated; instead, the needs of an expanding precolonial government were met by drawing upon those educated at the Qarawiyin or the Yusufiya (Burke 1976: 218), leading to a temporary reinvigoration of these institutions. Similarly, the colonial administrations established by both the French and the Spanish in 1912 were based upon an indirect rule which at first drew heavily upon the traditionally educated elite to fill the ranks of the judiciary, to implement the rural tax, and to act as scribes in other sections of the local and central administrations.

Despite the sudden decline of the mosque-universities in the 1930s, many individuals who were students in this period are still socially and politically active as a ‘secondary elite’ (Mosca 1939)—those who allow the rulers to rule.[3] The social networks of influence and patronage formed in part by such persons have remained relatively intact. This is particularly the case for Marrakesh and its hinterland, where former Yusufiya students continue to exercise an administrative, political and economic hegemony (Leveau 1976:93, 116).

*** The Art of Memory: The Idea of Islamic Knowledge

The cultural idea of religious knowledge has remained remarkably constant over time throughout the regions of Islamic influence. Writing specifically of medieval Islamic civilization, Marshall Hodgson states that education was ‘commonly conceived as the teaching of fixed and memorizable statements and formulas which could be learned without any process of thinking as such” (1974: 438; italics mine, D.E.). The last phrase raises the crucial issue of the meaning of ‘understanding’ associated with such a concept of knowledge. The ‘static and finite sum of statements’ (Hodgson 1974:438) conveyed by education constitutes the religious sciences (‘ilm; pl. ‘ulurriy the totality of knowledge and technique necessary in principle for a Muslim to lead the fullest possible

religious life. They also constitute the most culturally valued knowledge (cf. Rosenthal 1970). The paradigm of all such knowledge is the Quran, considered by Muslims literally to be the word of God; its accurate memorization in one or more of the seven conventional recitational forms is the first step in mastering the religious sciences. ‘Mnemonic domination’ (rnalaka l-hifd),[4] the memorization of key texts just as the Quran is memorized, is also the starting point for the mastery of the religious sciences. To facilitate this task, most of the standard treatises used by Moroccan men of learing are written in rhymed verse.

Historians and sociologists have tended to take at face value the ideological claim in Islam of the fixed nature of religious knowledge. Consequently, not much attention has been given to a more critical analysis of how such a system of knowledge is affected by its mode of transmission and its linkages with other aspects of society. Thus, educated Muslims consider all bodies of knowledge which elucidate the “high words’ (klam ‘alyd) of the Quran and the traditions of the Prophet to comprise the religious sciences. Normatively speaking, the emphasis in transmitting this knowledge is conservational, especially in Morocco. Even Ibn Khaldun (d. 1406) noted that the role of memory was stressed more in Morocco than elsewhere in the Islamic Middle East. It took sixteen years to acquire sufficient mastery of texts to teach on one’s own in Morocco, owing to the necessity of memorization, but only five in Tunis (Ibn Khaldun 1967: II, 430–31). Given this emphasis, it is not surprising that contemporary Muslim and European scholars have expressed the most extreme opinions about Moroccan traditional education. Writing with a firsthand knowledge of the Qarawiyin of sixty years ago, a distinguished French historian and Arabist noted the ‘astonishing’ (to a European) domestication of the memory involved in Islamic higher education. He claimed that it deadened the student’s sense of inquiry to the point that the knowledge and comportment of twentieth-century men of learning could be assumed ‘without fear of anachronism’ to be exact replicas of their predecessors of four centuries earlier (Levi-Provencal 1922: 11). More recently, a Western scholar has written of the ‘stifling dullness’ of Islamic education (L.C. Brown 1972: 31) and another, indicating perhaps an impatience with the unfamiliar principles upon which traditional Islamic education is based, claims that it ‘defies all [sic] pedagogical technique’ (Berque 1974: 167). Islamic education fares no better in the hands of Western-educated Muslims, who write of it as a ‘purely

mechanical, monotonous form of study' (Zerdoumi 1970: 196; see also Hussein 1948).

Two general propositions can be made concerning the form of Islamic knowledge. The first is that an intellectual tradition which emphasizes fixity and memory, as is characteristic of many traditions of religious knowledge, can still be capable of considerable flexibility. In practice, there is a considerable variation over time and place throughout the Islamic world as to the exact bodies of knowledge to be included in the religious sciences. Even during the 'classical' period of Islamic civilization, learning could be characterized as 'prismatic' (Roy Mottahedeh, personal communication): the interpretation and elaboration of the religious sciences constantly shifted. Once this shifting is recognized, the interesting issue is the circumstances under which redefinitions in what is considered to be the 'proper' scope of the religious sciences is brought about. The hyperbolic assertion of an earlier generation of scholars that Islamic education deadens all sense of inquiry is hard to reconcile with such transformations. In Morocco, for example, grammar, rhetoric, jurisprudence and to a lesser extent the prophetic tradition (hadith) had been among the most central of the religious sciences until the early twentieth century, although subjects which began to be emphasized (or reemphasized) after the 1920s as components of a 'new' orthodoxy included Quranic interpretation (tafsTr), theology, (kalam), and a knowledge of pre-Islamic and early Islamic poetry. If the compass of religious studies appears unduly narrow, it was no more so than the products of the English public school in the Victorian era, with an emphasis upon studies in Greek and Latin, or those who received a classical training in France. In a similar way, former students of the Yusufiya and the Qarawiyin have become not only scholars, but politicians and ministers of state who have played important roles in Morocco in recent years, and merchants and financiers quite capable of dealing with contemporary economic and entrepreneurial activities.

The second proposition is that the cognitive style associated with Islamic knowledge is tied closely to popular understandings of Islam in Morocco and has important analogues in nonreligious spheres of knowledge. This formal congruence has served to enhance the popular legitimacy of religious knowledge and its carriers in Morocco but at the same time has limited the pace and range of change in Islamic education, and the ways in which

changes are perceived. Thus the notion of Islamic law (shra‘) encompasses both religious law in its jural sense and law as a code for personal conduct. It was explained to me by a Moroccan in the following terms. He drew two parallel lines on a sheet of paper—another word derivative from the same root as shra‘ means ‘path’—and said that everything within the two lines was shra‘. All activities not explicitly within the body of knowledge encompassed by the lines constituted innovation (bidd‘). Some innovations are contrary to Islamic law but many others, such as religious brotherhoods or certain governmental reforms, are tolerated so long as they do not explicitly contradict the principles of Islamic law. Most Moroccans do not possess exact knowledge of this law, but nonetheless share the assumption that religious knowledge is fixed and knowable and that it is known by men of learning (see Eickelman 1976: 130–38.)

As for secular knowledge, mar if a is the term used to refer to knowledge not encompassed by the religious sciences; it includes knowledge related to commerce and crafts, including music and oral poetry. These have significant parallels in form with the religious sciences and are also presumed to be contained by fixed, memorizable truths. As Clifford Geertz (1976: 1488–96) has recently pointed out, popular oral poetry in North Africa takes this shape, just as effective public speech involves both the skillful invocation of Quranic phrases and the more mundane but memorizable stock of knowledge drawn from poetry and proverbs. A further parallel is in the model for the transmission of knowledge. The religious sciences in Morocco and throughout the Islamic world are thought to be transmitted through a quasi-genealogical chain of authority which descends from master or teacher (shaykh) to student (tdlity to insure that the knowledge of earlier generations is passed on intact. Knowledge of crafts is passed from master to apprentice in an analogous fashion, with any knowledge or skill acquired in a manner independent from such a tradition regarded as suspect.

These analogues in forms of knowledge suggest how Islamic education is appropriately to be evaluated. Marshall Hodgson, by characterizing it as not involving ‘any process of thinking as such,’ implicitly evaluated Islamic education in terms of Western pedagogical expectations. I shall argue in contrast that the measure of‘understanding’ appropriate to Islamic

knowledge is its use, often creative, in wider social contexts than those provided by the milieu of learning itself or by the abstract manipulation of memorized materials in ‘classroom’ situations.

*** The Quranic Presence: The Social Paradigm of ‘Understanding’

Any analysis of Islamic education must convey a sense of how many persons were educated and who they were. Until half a century ago, literacy almost necessarily implied schooling, although schooling did not necessarily imply literacy. The first years of study consisted of memorizing and reciting the Quran; only at later stages did more advanced students learn to read and write, and then usually outside the context of the mosque school (msidy Contemporary literacy is difficult to measure, let alone the literacy rates of earlier periods, but approximate estimates are essential to indicate the scope of traditional education. For the 1920s and 1930s it appears reasonable to assume that 4 per cent of the adult male population was literate, allowing for regional variations, and perhaps 10 to 20 per cent of the adult male urban population (Hart 1976: 183; H. Geertz 1968: 45–59; Brown 1976: 107).

Religious learning was popularly respected, yet Quranic schools were characterized by a high rate of attrition. Virtually every urban quarter and rural local community maintained a mosque school, as is still the case, for which a teacher (fqih) w&s contracted on an annual basis to teach and to perform certain other religious services for the community (Eickelman 1976: 97, 111–12).[5] Most Moroccan males and a fair number of girls, at least in towns, attended Quranic schools long enough to commit to memory a few passages of the Quran. Most students left before they acquired literacy and few remained the six to eight years that were generally required to memorize the entire Quran.

The formal features of Quranic schools have been frequently described (e.g., Michaux-Bellaire 1911), although the consequences of the form of pedagogical action upon modes of thought have only begun to be critically explored.[6] A typical fqih had between fifteen and twenty students in his charge at any time, ranging in age from four to sixteen. No printed or

manuscript copies of the Quran were used in the process of memorization. Part of the reason was the lack of printed or manuscript books, but an equally significant factor, discussed below, is the cultural concept of learning implicit in Islamic education. Each morning the fqih wrote the verses to be memorized on each student's wooden slate (luh). The child then spent the rest of the day memorizing these verses by reciting them out loud, as well as systematically reciting verses that had been previously learned. The following morning, each student recited for the fqih the verses of the previous day. Students who recited correctly washed their slates so that the next set of verses could be written on them. Memorization was thus incremental, with the recitation of new material added to that already learned (i.e. a, then a,b, then a,b,c,). Students were not grouped into 'classes' based either on age or on progress in memorization.

Two features consistently associated with Islamic education are its rigorous discipline and its lack of explicit explanation of memorized material. Both of these features are congruent with the essentially fixed concept of knowledge which is at the base of Islamic education and, at least in the Moroccan context, the associated concept of reason. 'Reason' ('qdl) is popularly conceived as man's ability to discipline his nature in order to act in accord with the arbitrary code of conduct laid down by God and epitomized by such acts of communal obedience as the fast of Ramadan (see Eickelman 1976: 130–38). Thus a firm discipline in the course of learning the Quran was culturally regarded as an integral part of socialization. This underlying popular attitude toward learning is one of the reasons why it is inappropriate to see Islamic education as a 'high tradition' grafted upon or independent of more popular implicit understanding of religion and society as has been done by an earlier tradition of Orientalist scholarship.

When a father handed his son over to a fqih, he did so with the formulaic phrase that the child could be beaten as the fqih saw fit. In practice, students were slapped or whipped when their attention flagged or when they repeated errors. Such punishments were normatively intended to induce a respect for accurate Quranic recitation. Former students explained that the fqih (or the student's father, when he participated in supervising the process of memorization) was regarded as only the impersonal agency of the occasional punishments which, like the unchanging word of God itself, were merely transmitted by him.[7] Moreover, students were told that any part of their

bodies struck in the process of Quranic memorization would not burn in hell. The same notion popularly applied to beatings which apprentices received from craftsmen (m’allmm dydl l~harfd).

Former students emphasized that throughout the long process of memorizing the Quran they asked no questions concerning the meaning of verse, even among themselves, nor did it occur to them to do so. Their sole activity was memorizing proper Quranic recitation. It should be kept in mind that the grammar and vocabulary of the Quran are not immediately accessible to speakers of colloquial Arabic and are even less so to students from Berber-speaking regions. Former students readily admitted that they did not comprehend what they were memorizing until fairly late in their studies (cf. Waterbury 1972: 32).

‘Understanding’ (fahm) in the context of such concepts of learning was not measured by any ability explicitly to ‘explain’ particular verses. Explicit explanation was considered a science in itself to be acquired only through years in the advanced study of exegetical literature (tafsTr). An informal attempt to explain meaning was considered blasphemy and simply did not occur. Instead, the measure of understanding was implicit and consisted of the ability to use particular Quranic verses in appropriate contexts. In the first few years of Quranic school, students recalled that they had little control over what they recited. They could not, for instance, recite specific chapters of the Quran if asked to do so, but had to begin with one of the sixty principal sections (hizb-s) into which the Quran is divided for recitational purposes. Firmer control was achieved as students accompanied their fathers, other relatives and occasionally their fqih to social gatherings. On such occasions they heard adults incorporate Quranic verses into particular contexts and gradually acquired the ability to do so themselves, as well as to recite specific sections of the Quran without regard for the order in which they had memorized it. Thus the measure of understanding was the ability to make appropriate practical reference to the memorized text, just as originality was shown in working Quranic references into novel but appropriate contexts. Knowledge and manipulation of secular oral poetry and proverbs in a parallel fashion was also a sign of good rhetorical style (Geertz 1976: 1492).

The high rate of attrition from Quranic schools supports the notion that mnemonic ‘possession’ can be considered a form of cultural capital (Bourdieu 1973: 80). Aside from small traditional gifts by the parents of children to the fqih, education was free. Yet most students were compelled to drop out after a short period in order to contribute to the support of their families or because they failed to receive parental support for the arduous and imperfectly understood process of learning. In practice, memorization of the Quran was accomplished primarily by the children of relatively prosperous households or by those whose fathers or guardians were already literate. I say ‘primarily,’ for education was still a means to social mobility, especially if a poorer student managed to progress despite all obstacles through higher, post-Quranic education (cf. Green 1976: 218–21).

The notion of cultural capital implies more than the possession of the material resources to allow a child to spend six to eight years in the memorization of the Quran; it also implies a sustained adult discipline upon the child. Many contemporary Western pedagogical concepts tend to treat education as a separable institutional activity, an idea inappropriate to learning in the traditional Islamic context.[8] Students’ families and (at later stages of learning) peers were integrally involved in the learning process. A recurrent feature in interviews with men of learning and others who successfully memorized the Quran is the participation of their fathers, elder brothers or other close relatives in their education, asking them to recite regularly and disciplining them in case of inattention or error. The formal written biographies (tarjama-s) of men of learning regularly relate anecdotes concerning parental sternness (e.g., as-Susi 1961: XIII, 35–36, 101,168). Moreover, even for urban students from wealthy families, formal education did not involve being systematically taught to read and write outside the context of the Quran. Students acquired such skills, if at all, from relatives or older students apart from their studies in Quranic schools (Berque 1974: 167—68), just as they acquired a demonstrated ‘understanding’ of the Quran through social situations in which Quranic verses and other memorized materials were used.

A student became a ‘memorizer’ (hdfid) once he knew the entire Quran; this set him apart from ordinary society even without additional studies.[9] In the precolonial era, fqihs and students often were the only strangers who could travel in relative safety through tribal regions without

making prior arrangements for ‘protection.’ This liminality was more pronounced in rural than in urban milieus. In the larger towns throughout Morocco, those wishing to pursue their studies could begin to sit with the circles of men of learning and their disciples that met regularly in the principal mosques (see Laroui 1977: 196–97, 199–201; Brown 1976: 77). In rural areas, most advanced students continued for at least a few years at one of the numerous madrasa-s (lit. ‘place of studies’) scattered throughout the country as late as the early decades of this century (Moulieras 1895; 1899; Michaux-Bellaire 1911: 436; Waterbury 1972: 30). Such madrasas were an essential intermediate stage when Arabic was a student’s second language. In some regions these madrasas were only clusters of tents; others were village mosques with adjoining lodgings for the shaykh and his students, who were supported, albeit frugally, by gifts of food from villagers and tribesmen.[10] Most students attended madrasas (often several in succession) within their region of origin. The three to five years characteristically spent in this all-male environment, at least partially removed from their families and communities of origin, was an intense socializing experience. Students frequently developed close ties with their shaykhs, who could often introduce them to scholars elsewhere in Morocco, and with fellow students. Again there was no fixed progression of studies, although serious students advanced their knowledge of Arabic and memorized basic commentaries on grammar and jurisprudence in this milieu.[11]

*** The Yusufiya: A Profile of Higher Islamic Learning

The scope of traditional higher education was considerably more restricted than that of Quranic education. In 1931, the year of the first reliable census in the French zone of Morocco, there were approximately 1,200 students in Morocco’s two mosque-universities. The country’s total population (including the zone of Spanish influence) was 5,800,000 (Noin 1970:1, 30, 32), so these students constituted a minuscule 0–02% percent of the population.[12] Since most students left their studies after a few years to become merchants, village teachers, notaries and the like, the even more limited number who eventually could claim to be men of learning is readily apparent.

Of two major centers of learning, the Yusufiya was smaller in scale than its Fez counterpart and for most of its existence tended to attract students and scholars only from the hinterland of Marrakesh and Morocco's south. Marrakesh first emerged as a major center of learning in the twelfth century, when it rivaled Seville and Cordoba in Muslim Spain. In following centuries its reputation as a center of learning rose and fell with the political vicissitudes of the city itself. Thus it thrived early in the nineteenth century and again reached national prominence with the residence of the sultan there almost continuously from 1895 to 1901 (Burke 1976: 42, 59). By the late 1920s and early 1930s, the period of immediate concern in this article, the Yusufiya milieu contained roughly 400 students. Six to eight shaykhs met daily with students in roughly ten lesson circles (halqa~s).[13]

The Yusufiya, like the Qarawiyin, constituted an institution in the basic sense of a field of activity whose members shared subjectively held ideas and conventions as to how given tasks should be accomplished. Although students and, to a more limited extent, their teachers were only transient members of the community of learning, most persons participated in the mosque-university (jdmfd) milieu long enough to give it stability in terms of its participants and their relations with wider society.

The mosque-university's use of space indicates its lack of sharp separation from the rest of society. The activities of the Yusufiya, like those of its counterpart in Fez, were concentrated in space which was shared with the wider community for purposes of worship and other gatherings. Lesson circles of teachers, students and onlookers met regularly in the Yusufiya (Ibn Yusif) mosque, one of the largest and most central in Marrakesh, as well as in some of the smaller mosques, religious lodges, and at least one shrine, that of the principal marabout of Marrakesh, 'Abd al-'Aziz Tabba. Only the hostels (madrasas) for rural students were reserved exclusively for the purposes of scholars.[14]

The Yusufiya had no sharply defined body of students or faculty, administration, entrance or course examinations, curriculum, or unified sources of funds. In fact, its former teachers related with amusement the frustrated efforts of French colonial officials to determine who were its 'responsible' leaders and to treat it as a. corporate entity analogous to a

medieval European university. Although teachers did not act as a collectivity, several older and respected shaykhs served as informal spokesmen for their colleagues on various occasions. Because of their recognition by the wider community, such individuals exercised a de facto control over the distribution of gifts given by wealthy or powerful individuals to the community of learning. The ability of certain men of learning to control such distributions and to exercise influence on other occasions did much to consolidate their reputations.

The activities of higher learning were integrally related to and limited by the values and expectations of wider society in numerous ways. Teachers were not formally appointed, although some held royal decrees (dahir-s) providing them with recognition and specified emoluments. Younger shaykhs simply began to teach with the implicit consent of established men of learning and students. The lack of formal appointment meant that those shaykhs of lesser reputation had to be especially scrupulous about comporting themselves and commenting on texts in ways expected both by the milieu of learning and the wider public. Recognition brought most, but not all, teachers small stipends from pious endowments designated for their support, in addition to occasional gifts of grain, olive oil and clothing from pious townsmen, tribesmen, the sultan and his entourage.

The publicly accessible activities of the mosque-university did not provide the full range of knowledge, including poetry, history and literature, or training in the rhetorical style considered essential for men of learning. The formal speech of men of learning was replete with allusions to classical texts and used stylistic conventions that were far removed from ordinary speech. These conventions included the deliberate rhyming of words and phrases and the use of a classicized diction that avoided the intrusion of colloquial or ‘common’ (‘ammi) syntax or phrases. Another quality prized by men of learning was the ability to compose verses for particular occasions. These circulated constantly in oral and written form. Most such poetry drew upon stock formulae, but these still had to be learned and were expected of educated men.[15]

As in any educational system with diffuse, implicit criteria for success and in which essential skills were not fully embodied in formal learning, the existing elite was favored. Moreover, the attribute of‘student’ in itself did not form a basis for meaningful collective action.[16] Students became ‘known’ as such through their comportment and acceptance by persons in the community of learning, not through any formal procedures. Each student was on his own to discern those persons and ideas that were significant in the world of learning and to create a constellation of effective personal ties with which to function. Students from Marrakesh itself, especially those from wealthy or powerful families, had substantial initial advantages in securing meaningful ties. They continued to be enmeshed in their families’ ties of kinship, friendship and patronage. Since all students from Marrakesh itself continued to live at home, those from wealthier and more prestigious families were in a position to invite shaykhs to their homes and to arrange for formal or informal tutoring. Such students often attended the public lesson circles of the mosques and shrines only irregularly.

Rural students generally were at an initial disadvantage. They were easily distinguished from townsmen by clothing and an awkward comportment (by urban standards),[17] and so were often treated rudely when they ventured beyond the immediate confines of the mosque-university and the hostels in which all but the most wealthy ‘outsider’ (afdqi) students were lodged. Nonetheless, some rural students, especially those who came from families of learning, often achieved distinction as scholars. Significantly, two of the most influential reformist shaykhs of the early twentieth century were of rural origin, as were several of the other leading shaykhs of the Yusufiya.[18]

Students acquired the necessary knowledge and personal contacts to achieve reputations as men of learning through three overlapping spheres of activity: (1) the lesson circles; (2) peer learning, including participation in student literary circles; and (3) acquiring sponsorship by established men of learning. The first and third spheres are familiar elements in accounts of Islamic education. Peer learning is not, since traditional Arabic sources have stylistic conventions that render them almost entirely silent on informal patterns of learning. Thus, in asking several Moroccan men of learning to prepare short written autobiographies, only learning derived from one’s shaykhs was mentioned, in conformity with culturally explicit assumptions

concerning the proper acquisition and transmission of learning.[19] Yet in interviews and discussions, the importance of peer learning was repeatedly stressed. The emphasis in the following analysis indicates how these spheres of learning fitted together and shaped the adaptation of Islamic education to new social circumstances.

Lesson Circles. The spatial and temporal setting of lesson circles is highly significant in suggesting the relation of forms of knowledge to society at large. Almost all of the lesson circles which met in the daytime were held in the Yusufiya mosque itself and concerned the most traditional and accepted texts of jurisprudence, grammar and rhetoric. They were conducted by the shaykhs regarded as the most senior and conventional. Evening lesson circles were usually held only in shrines, religious lodges and smaller mosques. These were conventionally devoted to less established subjects and texts and were generally conducted by reformist shaykhs and those of reformist sympathies, although a few were also conducted by shaykhs who lectured in the daytime at the Yusufiya.

The conduct of lesson circles in these settings, where they were in general accessible to the nonstudent public at all times, indicated popular support of and respect for the activities of learning but also imposed certain implicit constraints upon what was learned and the conduct of the lessons. Leading shaykhs were publicly treated with deference and respect as they walked through the streets; their hands were kissed, and it was not unusual for gifts to be offered them by pious townsmen and villagers. As another indication of respect, many merchants and craftsmen regularly attended lesson circles for the religious merit they felt such participation would bring, despite the fact that few of them could follow the classical Arabic in which they were presented. Nonetheless, their presence placed implicit restrictions upon the introduction of unfamiliar material in lesson circles, informal discussions between teachers and students, and anything which deviated from popular expectations of what was ‘proper’ for such activities.

Propriety of form obliged shaykhs to adhere to the rhetoric of classical Arabic and to comment only upon the texts of others. The necessity always formally to comment upon the texts of others constrained both reformist and other shaykhs to stress that they spoke less for themselves than for their roles as

transmitters of a fixed body of knowledge. As Bloch has observed, at a high level of rhetorical formality, the content of speech and the order in which material is arranged are not seen ‘as the result of the acts of anybody in particular, but of a state which has always existed’ (1975: 16). Such form is of course congruent with the paradigm of mnemonic (and popularly legitimate) learning. In practice, shaykhs could introduce a wide latitude of material into their commentaries, but the symbolic base of the educational process was still a set of texts which took years to memorize and even more time to use actively in discourse. In itself, the form of commentaries did not limit subject innovation and adaptation to change, except that it ideologically deflected attention from awareness of historical and contextual transformations.

The form of lesson circles conveyed the notion of the fixity of knowledge by minimizing active student contributions and by providing no checks upon what students understood. Only the student chosen as reader (sdrid) of the text to be commented upon took an active role. As this task was rarely rotated, few students acquired even this experience. The shaykh interrupted the student’s reading only to correct errors of vocalization and to deliver his commentary.[20] No questions were asked during these sessions and students rarely took notes or made annotations in the printed copies of texts which a few possessed. Former students explained that deference and propriety toward their shaykhs prevented their openly raising any issues. Questions had to be placed indirectly, usually in private as the shaykh prepared to leave the mosque or shrine, so as not to suggest a public challenge to his scholarship (see also Delphin 1889: 28). Moreover, as former students emphasized, informal contact with their shaykhs to discuss specifically textual matters was exceptional. Thus there were no significant practical opportunities for students to use the concepts or materials they sought to learn under the guidance of their shaykhs.

A parenthetical comment is essential here. There is no reason to presume, as many scholars have, that latter-day Islamic higher education in Morocco was a ‘decayed’ remnant of earlier periods. Intra-Islamic differences noted by Ibn Khaldun have already been mentioned. In Morocco at least, the educational process was never fully encompassed within the public activities of lesson circles. In other countries lesson circles sometimes were arenas for long-term dialogues between teachers and their students (e.g, Snouck Hurgronje 1931:

190); this pattern is only one of several that Islamic education has taken, although it has often incorrectly been assumed to be normative for the entire Islamic world. Thus there were several patterns of Islamic education, each of which is appropriately analyzed in its particular context.

Reformist shaykhs sought to introduce new material into lesson circles and to draw students into a critical questioning of the relation of Islam to contemporary society (Merad 1971). A description and analysis of the context of their lesson circles and the extent to which they were innovative indicate the constraints which the public and religious conception of valued knowledge placed upon the potential for adaptation. Former students of the period enthusiastically spoke of the reformist shaykhs as having ‘liberated’ (harrar) them from what they regarded as commentaries upon a narrow range of subjects that had remained unchanged for three or four hundred years. Such hyperbolic claims accurately reflect the attitude of students, but reformist teachings fit well within the ‘prismatic’ nature of Islamic learning. A comparison of lists of texts commented upon at different periods from the late nineteenth to the early twentieth century indicates regular variations in both subjects and texts (Delphin 1889: 30–41; Berque 1949; Peretie 1912: 334–45). In practice, the principal achievement of the reformers of the 1920s was to introduce material into lesson circles that men of learning earlier had privately acquired in the houses of the elite: Quranic exegesis, theology, history, and classical poetry and literature (adab). The reformers argued that these topics were as much a part of the religious sciences as those subjects that had been taught conventionally in Morocco prior to their time (as-Susi 1961: IX, 167–68). Nonetheless, knowledge continued to be legitimized by indicating how it fitted within the religious sciences. It also had to be conveyed in classical Arabic, which limited its accessibility to the same select few who participated in traditional Islamic education. Reformist shaykhs, to seek legitimacy for their teachings, lectured within the range of popularly expected locales and times. The fact that most lectured only after the sunset prayers, a time set aside for the more peripheral religious sciences or for less established shaykhs, and in locales such as religious lodges and smaller mosques, signaled to all but their immediate followers that their teachings were not symbolically as central as the “core’ components of the religious sciences taught during the day at the Yusufiya. Within the restricted group of mosque-university students, reformist shaykhs enjoyed a considerable following, despite the active opposition of many of the more traditional shaykhs, who

were frequently backed by public support and that of the political authorities. In the context of the lesson circles, the reformists did nothing to make their teachings accessible to a wider audience or fundamentally to change prevalent understandings of the forms in which valued knowledge was conveyed.

Peer Learning. Peer learning has been neglected in the study of many educational systems because it is characteristically informal.[21] In Morocco it provided what public lesson circles could not—an active engagement with and practice in the comprehensison of basic texts. For most rural students, peer learning had special importance since such students were usually even more cut off than their urban counterparts from initiating informal contacts with their shaykhs, especially during the earlier years of their studies. To indicate the significance of such learning in the earlier years of studies, below is an excerpt from an interview in which a retired Qadi, who was sixteen when he first arrived at the Yusufiya in 1928, described how he invited an older, poorer student to share his rooms at the madrasa in which he was staying. The Qadi was from a rural farifily that had produced several judges and men of learning. One of these was an elder brother who had entered the Yusufiya several years earlier and who thus was able to arrange introductions for this younger brother to several of his former teachers. At the house of one of these shaykhs, the Qadi encountered the man who later became his roommate. Because the interview contains an excellent normative description of how men of learning are described, it is given at length:

[My roommate] was a great man of learning, who never spoke unless it was necessary. The Quran was always on his lips. He lived from the daily bread given rural students and from the daily 8 francs he received for reciting [the Quran] at a mosque.

I observed his conduct for some time. Finally, I spoke to him and said that I was a beginner [in the religious sciences] and wanted someone to live with me who could help me in my studies. So I gave him the key to one of my rooms and said it was his. I wanted nothing in return except the opportunity to speak with him about the books I was reading.

What I had been doing until I met him was memorizing books, but without understanding what I read. We worked alone for the first several months that we lived together. Then, although I was a newcomer to Marrakesh, students who had been there for years asked me to read with them. They saw that I was a serious student and wanted to study with me.

For seven years I lived with [him].... This was the real learning that I did in my years at the Yusufiya. Of course I learned much at the lesson circles, but it was in reading texts with [my roommate] and with other students and in explaining them to each other that most of the real learning went on.

Knowledge of basic texts in themselves, however, was sufficient only to acquire modest positions as notaries or village teachers, at least for those who used such knowledge in a more than iconic fashion. This was the terminal stage of learning for all but a few students. Only a few students acquired the wider range of knowledge considered essential for men of learning. This additional learning and the practice necessary to acquire competent rhetorical style took place through a complementary form of peer learning—the small, ephemeral literary circles to which a large number of the more successful students belonged. These literary circles flourished especially with the rise of the proto-nationalist movement in the late 1920s, but similar groups existed in earlier periods as well and were by no means unique to Morocco (Delphin 1889: 27, 53; Heyworth-Dunne 1968: 13, 40, 66). Participants in such circles read and discussed the Moroccan literary magazines (e.g., Majallat al-Maghrib) that had begun to emerge during this period, Moroccan newspapers and those of the Arab East (banned by the French), books on subjects such as history, geography, poetry and their own compositions.

As was the case with other aspects of higher Islamic education, student literary circles were weak in organizational form and frequently dissolved. Most were relatively small, of a dozen or so members, and usually met daily, after the sunset prayers. These literary circles provided a training ground for speaking and writing within the conventions of formal Arabic. Relations among members of these circles approached equality, so that participants

took turns in delivering speeches which were subjected to the criticism of the group. As an indication of these speeches, one former student showed me a notebook containing one which he presented in 1932. The aim of the speech was to defend Marrakesh against the charge that it was not a major cultural center because so many of its inhabitants were Berber-speakers and because it had a smaller community of learned men than Fez. In alliterative, rhymed prose, the student defended Marrakesh by describing its physical beauty, its great poets and men of letters, both past and contemporary. The speech further enumerates the major marabouts (sdlihm) associated with Marrakesh, confirming the lack of a sharp dichotomy in the early 1930s between a reform-minded Islam and a more popular form in which local maraboutic beliefs were considered to be an integral part of Islam (see Eickelman 1976: 211–30). The speech concludes by exuberantly labeling Marrakesh the ‘Baghdad of the Maghrib.’ Most of the speech consists of conventional platitudes, but its content, diction, and syntax reflect a style mastered only by the traditionally educated.

Some literary circles, especially those influenced by reformist ideas, were concerned to a limited extent with undertaking political action for the benefit of the wider Islamic community. Carriers of religious knowledge regarded themselves as legitimate spokesmen for Islam and were popularly regarded as such. This was especially the case after the ‘Berber Proclamation’ of 1930, by which the French formally extracted certain Berber-speaking regions of Morocco from the jurisdiction of Islamic law courts. This event had repercussions throughout the Islamic world as a symbol of the efforts of European colonial powers to weaken Islam. The practical influence of men of learning, sharply circumscribed since the advent of colonial rule, temporarily reemerged with this event. In some Moroccan cities, including Fez, protests organized against this proclamation were overtly political and ocasionally violent. In general, however, protests took traditional and nonviolent forms such as public communal prayers similar to those made in cases of drought or other natural disasters. Many of these prayers were organized by literary circles. In Marrakesh, firmly under the control of its pasha, Hajj Thami al-Glawi, demonstrations were rapidly quelled. Students with ties to urban and rural notables were warned in advance by their relatives to stay removed from the ‘troubles.’ Participants in several literary circles nonetheless took action which could at least formally be construed as nonpolitical. One such action was for students individually to persuade (to avoid suspicions of organized group activity) the men who gathered each evening in the town’s

mosques to recite the Quran in unison instead of separately, as had been the practice, in order to symbolize the unity of Islam.

The narrow range of actions undertaken by participants in lesson circles suggests the restricted vision of public responsibility associated with the Islamic tradition of ‘gentlemanly’ education. A man of learning’s primary responsibility was to acquire religious knowledge and to use it in prescribed ways, not to seek to alter the shape of society. Reformist Muslim intellectuals in North Africa, stimulated at least in part by the fact of European political dominance, challenged many aspects of Islam as it was locally understood both popularly and in educated circles, but they fell short of offering ideological and practical alternatives to the existing social order. Reformist teachings offered no alternative to the accepted popular notion of social inequality as a ‘natural’ fact of the social order, nor did they elaborate a wider notion of social responsibility to men of learning than that of perfecting their own understanding of religious knowledge and communicating it to relatively restricted circles (Merad 1971: 193–227; Eickelman 1976: 126–30).

Sponsorship. Students remained in the milieu of learning for as long as they chose or were able to do so. Just as there were no formal markers of entry to this milieu, there were none upon leaving it. Only a few students managed to acquire reputations as men of learning. There were no explicit criteria by which such recognition could be achieved, so education could not assume the function of‘certification’ so closely associated with modern Western institutions.

One means, however, of signaling the completion of studies was for a student to ask each of his shaykhs for a ‘teaching license’ (ijdzd). Such documents specified the texts or subjects studied and the qualifications of the teacher. In Morocco and throughout the Islamic world, teaching licenses were only as good as the reputations of their writers and the facility with which their bearers could use them (cf. Heyworth-Dunne 1968: 67–69). As one former student remarked, one sought ijazas from those shaykhs who ‘had God’s blessings in the religious sciences and feared God the most, those who were older and more powerful and who always had their hands kissed in the street.’ In practice, many outstanding students claimed that they deliberately did not ask for such documents; so many were

prepared as mere courtesies for educated rural notables and not to possess them could in some circumstances be a mark of higher status. What counted was sponsorship and active recognition by established men of learning and the effective use to which an individual could put such ties as well as those with other persons of influence.

Since the world of learning was not a closed community, support in nonlearned environments could also be decisive in acquiring a reputation for learning. Moroccan men of learning of the generation of the 1930s have significant ties with each other created in part through common schooling, but these ties are not exclusive ones and overlap with social bonds created on other bases. Social recognition as a man of learning is an attribute which is used variously according to social context. In Morocco such persons constitute a social type rather than a distinct group which has sharply defined boundaries or which acts collectively now or did so in the past (Brown 1976: 75–81; Burke 1976: 218; cf. Eickelman 1976: 89–91, 183–89). [22]

The majority of students rarely used religious knowledge in more than an iconic fashion, as a marker of participation in the milieu of learning. When I asked former students about the fact that most left their studies prior to acquiring scholarly recognition, there was often a formal expression of regret but none of failure attached to such attribution. In discussing their years at the mosque-university, most emphasized the opportunities they created to secure ties with persons within and outside the community of learning. These ties often were of use later in facilitating commercial, political and entrepreneurial activities. The frequency with which such ties were mentioned suggests an implicitly shared conception of career, although not in the narrowly occupational sense of the term. When I asked former students what were their goals at the time of their studies, most replied that they were concerned primarily with the acquisition of the religious sciences. This was to be expected, given the cultural emphasis upon such valued knowledge. Acquiring the religious sciences additionally implied participation in social networks with persons drawn from different backgrounds and regions of Morocco and thus with actual or potential access to a wide range of centers of power. No other preparation, except perhaps association with the sultan’s entourage, enabled a person to acquire such a wide range of potential associations. Knowledge of the religious sciences was

of course essential at some level in order to function as a Qadi, a notary, a scribe with the government or a teacher in the religious sciences. Acquiring such knowledge also provided the consociational base from which a wide range of extralocal political, economic and social activities could be undertaken, at least so long as there were no major alternatives to Islamic higher education.

*** Knowledge and Social Change

When such alternatives developed on a wide scale in the 1930s, higher Islamic education quickly lost its former vitality. As mentioned earlier, its sudden decline can be explained by a relatively straightforward conjunction of events. First was the French ‘organization’ of Morocco’s two principal mosque-universities, undertaken primarily to curb their powerful symbolic and practical roles as centers of popular protest against French rule. French organization meant in effect that the retained faculty became salaried civil servants and subject to governmental control. Those teachers remaining in the organized institution suffered a significant loss of popular prestige; gifts to them by pious Moroccans, rich and poor, virtually ceased. Rather than teach in an ‘organized’ milieu, several leading teachers at the Qarawiyin chose to leave it in 1931 for elsewhere in the country, including the Yusufiya and mosques in smaller towns. A similar exodus occurred from the Yusufiya when organization was imposed on it in 1939, although some faculty and students remained until it was informally closed after independence in 1956. [23]

Another major factor was the increasing availability of schools run by the French. By the 1930s the French had completed a network of schools for the sons of notables. After the defeat of ‘Abd al-Krim’s Riffian Republic in 1926, the Morroccan elite ended a period of indecision and began increasingly to enroll their children in these schools. In a context analogous to what Colonna (1975) has described for Algeria, Islamic institutions became the least attractive option open to Moroccan Muslims in colonial society. Moreover, significant numbers of Moroccan graduates from French schools were available by the mid-1930s to fill the new posts of the colonial bureaucracy and other key roles in colonial society which remained open to Muslims.

Studies in a mosque-university ceased to be an effective means of social advancement.

The consequence was to leave mosque-universities primarily to poor students of rural origin.[24] By the late 1930s, Islamic education had begun to be regarded with disdain even by those who took part in it during earlier periods because of the lack of ‘analysis and synthesis’ in its content (Berque 1974:173–79). Such a criticism implicitly compared the style and content of Islamic education with that at least ideally available in schools provided by the French. Concerned Moroccan bourgeoisie and men of learning sought to create ‘Free Schools’ that were independent of French control but adopted some European subjects and pedagogical methods to provide alternative education, primarily in Arabic (Damis 1974). As important as such schools were as an ideological expression on the part of those who backed them, their educational impact was minimal. They had major problems of personnel and failed to recruit the children of Moroccan notables, who saw their children’s futures and their own increasingly tied to the training and certification which only French schools could provide.

The more interesting, and difficult, question is why this collapse had no direct impact upon the basic popular and learned paradigm of valued knowledge as fixed and memorizable, especially since at least in principle the social reproduction of such knowledge was necessary to make available the word of God for the guidance of the Islamic community. Why did the effective collapse not result in any major concerted action, or reaction, on the part of men of learning? This issue directly involves the relation of knowledge to society in the Moroccan context and the way in which value is placed on various bodies of knowledge and its carriers.

Traditionally educated Moroccan intellectuals were acutely aware of the major transformations that their society was experiencing as a consequence of colonial rule. The teaching licenses which scholars such as Mukhtar as-Susi (e.g., 1935) prepared during this period reiterate the themes that while the entire world is changing, the Maghrib remains in ignorance, with Fez and Marrakesh still asleep and their men of learning dying one by one. Yet in practical terms, the principal response of reformist intellectuals to this perceived crisis was merely to seek to persuade those who already

possessed an understanding of the religious sciences to accept the ‘new orthodoxy’ which they advocated. Yet these same individuals sent their sons to French-run schools rather than mosque-universities or even the independent ‘Free Schools’ set up in major cities.

A partial explanation for the inaction of men of learning is the fact that colonial rule posed no direct threat to their material interests. Although men of learning did not form a class or an organized group either in the preprotectorate period or after the inception of colonial rule in 1912, they figured significantly among both rural and urban notables. From the inception of the protectorate the French sought to engage the support of this elite by preserving their material interests and by integrating them in the system of indirect rule, a system which functioned with a high measure of success until the severe economic and political dislocations which accompanied the Second World War. Unlike neighboring Algeria, where the influence of the traditional elite was systematically destroyed, in Morocco they were given administrative and political preferment and their children were given preferential access to French education. Despite the radical shift in forms of education, the elite managed in general to confer their status upon their descendants (Waterbury 1970; cf. Bourdieu and Passeron 1977). Traditional men of learning, like other Moroccans, shared a conception of society ordered through concrete, albeit shifting, social networks and obligations, not by groups and classes. The French protectorate (and the Spanish) presented no direct challenge to this conception of the social order.

Taken by itself, this explanation based on material interests is insufficient. It does not account for the continued popular respect enjoyed by men of learning. In an excellent study of the rural notables of Morocco in the 1960s, a French scholar writes of the preponderant influence of traditional men of learning who, in spite of what he calls their ‘confused ideal of social justice’ (Leveau 1976: 93), have managed to retain real popular support while a more ‘modern’ bureaucratic elite, exposed to Western education and influenced by cosmopolitan Western life styles, has failed almost completely to do so.

The ideal of social justice held by traditional men of learning is ‘confused’ only when analysts seek to consider it in Western categories.[25] A full

discussion of the world view of traditionally educated Moroccan intellectuals and its relation to popular conceptions of the social order is beyond the scope of this paper, but two implicit premises of it have already been indicated—the notion of inequality as a natural fact of the social order and a highly restricted sense of social responsibility. These premises are perhaps most effectively delineated through comparison with two contrasting traditions of 'gentlemanly' education, English and Chinese, which also possessed implicit notions of social inequality. Students of public schools in Victorian England were instilled with a sense of equity or 'fair play,' leadership and public spirit which had its analogues in political life, while in China men of learning were considered to possess exemplary moral virtues which suited them for positions of authority (Wilkinson 1964; Weber 1958). There was no expectation in Morocco that Islamic men of learning should constitute an ideological vanguard, even in times of major social upheaval. They could on occasion serve as iconic expressions of popular sentiment, but there was no developed tradition in which they were able to shape these sentiments or guide the direction of social change.

The affinity between popular conceptions of valued knowledge and those conveyed in Islamic education explain the continuing popular legitimacy of such forms of knowledge and, at least in principle, of its carriers. What of the limitations of form of Islamic knowledge and its associated intellectual technology? The notion that the most valued knowledge was fixed by memorization in the first place limited the number of texts which any individual thoroughly could 'possess,' just as did the notion that valued knowledge was accessible to all men of learning. A range of materials could be and were introduced, but there was no developed tradition of specialization associated with this tradition of learning. The consequence was that innovations of content tended to suffer the same fate as innovations in societies without developed traditions of writing. Men of influence in the milieus of learning could to a limited extent introduce new materials, but innovations suggested by others had little chance of taking hold. Nor could forms of knowledge proliferate. The body of knowledge shared by men of learning of any generation shifted over time, but it did not tend to become more elaborate in form. There was no room in this tradition for disciplinary competences to be carved out and elaborated by smaller communities of men of learning. Moreover, since knowledge was considered to be fixed and memorizable, the central ideological problem was that of justifying any change of form or content in terms of its essential replication

of past forms, instead of allowing an elaboration of form and content at least partially autonomous from generally accepted forms.

In the past, the memorizable truths of Islamic education were passed from generation to generation. Since the collapse of Islamic education in the 1930s, this is no longer the case. To the present, this collapse of the 'technology' of intellectual reproduction has had no pronounced impact; as elsewhere, major changes in educational systems take a long time to have a widespread impact. The concept of knowledge as fixed and memorizable truths is still concretely demonstrated in Moroccan society by men who have memorized the Quran and its proper recitation, and associated texts are still mnemonically carried by the last generation of traditionally educated men of learning. Yet the number of individuals who are able to demonstrate 'possession' of such knowledge is rapidly diminishing. One consequence is that the older generation of men of learning consider their younger replacements as essentially ignorant, knowing little of Islamic law beyond the bilingual French and Arabic handbooks prepared by the Ministry of Justice. The accuracy of this appraisal is not at issue here, but implied in it is the notion that their replacements are little more than bureaucratically appointed specialists who carry neither the authority nor the sense of legitimacy that they regard themselves as having possessed in the past. This notion appears largely to be popularly shared.

The shift of religious knowledge from that which is mnemonically 'possessed' to material that can only be consulted in books suggests a major transformation in the nature of knowledge and its carriers. It may still be ideologically maintained that religious knowledge is memorizable and immutable, as is certainly the case for the word of God as recorded in the Quran, but the lack of concrete embodiment of this premise in the carriers of such knowledge indicates a major shift. This shift may not be consciously recognized, just as many Muslim intellectuals claim that the French colonial experience had little impact on the belief and practice of Islam, which from a sociological point of view is decidedly not the case (Eickelman 1974). One possible consequence of this shift is that socially recognized carriers of religious learning are no longer confined to those who have studied accepted texts in circumstances equivalent to those of the mosqueuniversities, with their bias toward favoring members of the elite. Those who can interpret what Islam 'really' is can now be of more variable social status than was the

case when mnemosyne was an essential feature of the legitimacy of knowledge. The carriers of religious knowledge will increasingly be anyone who can claim a strong Islamic commitment; freed from mnemonic domination, religious knowledge can increasingly be delineated and interpreted in a more abstract and flexible fashion. A long apprenticeship under an established man of learning is no longer a prerequisite to legitimizing one's own religious knowledge.

The essential limitation of the 'correspondence' approach in delineating and analyzing the relation between systems of meaning and patterns of social domination is that it presumes rather than demonstrates a symmetry between the two domains. It might be argued that no scholar, or almost none, has sought directly to apply such a premise to education or other systems of meaning in complex, historically known societies. Yet a dominant theme in recent anthropological discussions has been to propose a radical separation on the analytical level between culture (systems of meaning) and the social contexts in which such notions are maintained (e.g., Schneider and Smith 1973: 6). Such a resolutely separatist approach may be effective in uncovering the logic of a particular cultural system, but by neglecting the relations of knowledge to power and the communicative aspects of the interrelations between symbol systems and social action, it cannot explain how systems of meaning influence, and are influenced by, the various historical contexts in which they occur. An exploration of the relations between the forms of religious knowledge in Islam as it is understood in Morocco and the intellectual technology by which such forms were shaped, legitimized and transmitted, suggests that the relation between the two is complex and irregular, so that it must be traced through specific social historical contexts rather than deduced from a set of abstract assumptions. Such an approach adds a crucial historical dimension to the sociological understanding of symbols and of systems of meaning.

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[1] The fact that Evolution was the last of Durkheim’s major works to be translated into English is indicative of its neglect, as is the omission of all reference to it in E.K. Wilson’s introduction to the English translation of Moral Education (1973).

[2] A number of excellent ethnographic accounts depict higher education in Morocco at various periods from the late nineteenth century through the 1930s. These include Delphin (1889); Peretie (1912); Michaux-Bellaire (1911); Marty (1924); Berque (1938, 1949, 1958, 1974); ‘Uthman (1935); and (indirectly) as-Susi (1961). As for studies elsewhere, Islamic education without competing institutional forms survived in the Yemen until the 1950s, but to date there are no published anthropological or social historical

accounts available. Snouck Hurgronje (1931: 153–212) provides a brief but valuable ethnographic account of higher education in Mecca in 1884–85. For a general bibliographical survey of sources on Islamic education, see Waardenburg (1974).

[3] The terms ‘primary ’and ‘secondary’ elite in this context refer to function rather than to any organized group or class. The primary elite is today almost exclusively constituted by Moroccans bilingual in French and Arabic.

[4] This is the contextual meaning of the term among contemporary Moroccan men of learning. In other sociohistorical contexts its meaning differs. For instance, in psychological treatises of the ‘Abbasid period the term implies ‘the faculty of memory.’ I am grateful to Roy Mottahedeh for pointing out this alternative usage.

[5] The only estimate of the number of these schools in any region is a 1955 census conducted in Spanish Morocco: 3,292 for a population estimated at 917,000 in 1950 (Valderrama 1956: map opposite p. 155; Noin 1970:1, 33). This means that there was a Quranic school for every 279 persons. Since none of these schools was supported by the government, it is reasonable to assume a similar proportion of schools to the population in the 1920s and 1930s.

[6] The process and context of memorization deserve more careful attention than they have received in earlier accounts of Islamic education. The importance of these issues became clear to me only after completing the fieldwork on which this account is based, so that here I only outline what appear to be some of the salient problems that will be pursued in later research. The Islamic emphasis upon memory is not unique in itself, as has been implied by some scholars. Elaborate mnemonic systems developed in classical Greece and Rome which facilitated memorization through the regular association of material with ‘memory posts,’ visual images such as the columns of a building or places at a banquet table (Yates 1966: 2–7). Accompanying such techniques was the notion that mnemonic knowledge was ‘purer’ than that communicated through writing (Notopoulos 1938: 478). What is remarkable about the use of memory in the context of Islamic

education in Morocco is not the performance of ‘prodigious’ mnemonic feats —such ‘feats’ were fully paralleled in Europe (Yates, 1966). Rather, it is the insistence by former students of the absence of devices to facilitate memorization. In practice, visual cues and markers were absent but aural ones existed. Students did recall being able to visualize the shape of the letters on their slates and even the circumstances associated with the memorization of particular Quranic verses and other texts. Yet such potential mnemonic cues were not systematically developed, perhaps for the implicit reason that their use would associate extraneous images with the original word of God and thus dilute its transmission. Although students deny the existence of mnemonic devices and classical treatises which stress the importance of memory likewise mention none (e.g., Ibn Khaldun 1967: III), a recent psychological study suggests that patterns of intonation and rhythm serve as mnemonic markers (Wagner 1978: 14).

[7] The Senegalese novelist Cheikh Hamidou Kane (1963: 3–38) provides the only account of which I am aware that manages to convey the mixture of pious respect for the exact recitation of the word of God and affection for their students associated with the severe attitude of Quranic teachers toward their students.

[8] Such notions have also hampered the study of education in Western historical contexts. For colonial America, see Bailyn (1960).

[9] Like other technical terms, hafid is subject to contextual variation. Among highly educated Moroccans, it refers only to the most outstanding scholars of any generation.

[10] Until the late nineteenth century, students of each region also made collective visits to surrounding villages each year after harvest to collect donations of grain and animals. With these donations, students then camped together and feasted for a week or longer. This practice ceased with the disorders which accompanied increasing European penetration (Aubin 1906: 78–79; Michaux-Bellaire 1911: 437).

[11] From the sixteenth through the early nineteenth century, many religious lodges (zawya-s) in rural regions were also centers for more advanced learning (Eickelman 1976: 39, 60, 222, 249). As for the early twentieth century, only the more standard texts tended to predominate in rural madrasas: the Ajarumlya, the Alfiya and the Tuhfat. Since these texts were memorized by all educated men, there was no ambiguity in referring to them by title only. A short description of these texts will indicate the nature of the material memorized. The first is a concise treatise on grammar, its title being an adjectival form of the name of author, Ibn Ajarum (d. 1324). Often its memorization was begun by writing its verses on the lower part of a student's slate before he had completed memorization of the Quran. The Alfiya of Ibn Malik (d. 1274) is a grammar of 1,000 verses, so compact that its comprehension requires elaborate commentaries. Finally, Ibn 'Asim's (d. 1426) Tuhfat al-Hukkam is a handbook of practical law with 104 chapters and 1,679 verses.

[12] In comparison, French secondary education for Moroccan Muslims accounted for 505 students in 1924–25 and 1,618 students in 1930–31 (French Protectorate 1931:245).

[13] The Qarawiyin had 700 students in the early 1920s with roughly 40 lesson circles meeting regularly, given by 25 shaykhs (Marty 1925: 345).

[14] This is a second contextual meaning of the term, in addition to that of 'school' in rural contexts.

[15] As-Susi's voluminous writings provide particularly useful anthologies of these conventions. Since he was aware that he was documenting a world of learning that was not being transmitted to a younger generation, most of the literary allusions in the writings which he cites are fully annotated.

[16] At earlier periods in both Marrakesh and Fez there was an annual ‘Carnival of the Students.’ Students solicited contributions from townsmen, and a student was proclaimed ‘sultan’ for the duration of the outing held each spring (Cenival 1925). These occasions involved the students of each mosque-university as a collectivity, but the forms of organization which emerged were weak and dissolved at the end of the carnival. Student carnivals ceased in the mid-1920s in Fez and even earlier in Marrakesh.

[17] During the 1920s, for example, most students of rural origin still shaved their heads and as a sign of humility toward their shaykhs did not wear turbans. This practice had virtually disappeared among younger townsmen, who in general adopted the fez as a sign of modernity.

[18] The two reformist shaykhs were Bu Shu‘ayb Dukkall (1878–1937) and Mukhtar as-Susi (1900–63). Dukkall was from a rural family which included several generations of men of learning. He first gained attention in Marrakesh at the age of thirteen by reciting all of SIdl Khalil’s Mukhtasar (a standard treatise on Maliki jurisprudence) before Sultan Hasan I (reigned 1873–94) and showing a precocious command of classical Arabic. Later he gained further recognition in his studies at Mecca and Cairo. In 1910, at the age of thirty-two, he was appointed QadT of Marrakesh and later became Minister of Justice (Jirari 1976:9–18). As-Susi was from a family of learning in the Sus region of Morocco’s south, where his father was a leader in the Darqawi religious order. He studied at a rural madrasa in the Sus and from 1919 to 1923 at the Yusufiya, where he was a student of Dukkali. From 1923 to 1927 he was at the Qarawiyin, where he came into contact with most of the later leaders of the nationalist movement. In 1929 he returned to Marrakesh, where his lesson circles were highly popular among students. The French grew suspicious of his growing influence and in 1935 assigned him to forced residence in his native village (Touimi, Khatibi and Kably 1974: 40–41).

[19] Tarjama signifies both biography and autobiography. The ability to prepare such a document is one of the attributes of men of learning. The third person is used both for preparing an account of one’s own life and that of others.

[20] Part of this system of teaching can be attributed to the lack of printed texts until the late nineteenth century. As with Greek and Latin literature in medieval Europe, the transmission of a text entailed taking it by dictation from someone reputed to know its proper form, so as to prevent the accretion of errors (Reynolds and Wilson 1974). More significantly, however, only the oral transmission of knowledge was regarded as culturally legitimate in the Moroccan context; knowledge acquired exclusively from the study of books was regarded as unreliable. Significantly, the introduction of printed texts had little impact upon the form of the lesson circles.

[21] The overall neglect of the importance of peer learning in studies of Islamic education is still remarkable, despite the silence of traditional sources. McLachlan describes a similar neglect in the study of colleges in early nineteenth-century America, despite the fact that the core of learning at this period was ‘an extraordinarily intense system of education by peers’ (1974:474).

[22] Although this discussion applies primarily to Morocco, I think it is useful in reconsidering the social roles of Islamic men of learning in other cultural contexts. Among the important analyses indicating the range of variation in these roles are Bulliet (1972), Mottahedeh (1975), Hourani (1968), Lapidus (1967), Keddie (1972), Baer (1971), and Green (1976).

[23] The Qarawiyin, now integrated into the national university system, continues to exist. Officially, the Yusufiya still exists as a branch of the Qarawiyin, although since independence in 1956 it has possessed no formal students or working faculty. A few faculty, I was told in Marrakesh in 1976, have been allowed to continue to draw their salaries until they reach retirement age.

[24] Estimates of the number of students of rural and urban origin at the Qarawiyin, for which figures are available, indicate the impact of these changes. In 1924, 300 students were from Fez itself while 419 were from outlying regions, predominantly rural (Marty 1924: 337). By 1938, seven years after reform, only 100 students were from Fez while 800 were of rural origin (Berque 1938: 197). Although no exact figures are available for

Marrakesh, informants estimate that there were roughly 400 students at the Yusufiya in the early 1930s, of whom about 150 were from Marrakesh itself. The number of urban students had dropped to a handful by 1935, almost none of whom were from prominent rural or urban households.

[25] In a critique of his own study of Arab intellectuals, Albert Hourani (1970: viii) has pointed out the general scholarly inattention to the impact upon society of those thinkers who chose to reject a significant dialogue with Western thought. This critique is confirmed indirectly in the work of a Western-educated Moroccan intellectual, Abdallah Laroui (1974: 19–28), who divides modern Arab intellectuals into three types: technocrats, liberals and clerics. He largely succeeds in portraying the dilemmas of the first two Western-influenced types in their confrontation with Western social and political ideals and search for ‘authenticity,’ but conveys only an unconvincing stereotype of the ‘clerics,’ his term for the products of traditional Islamic education. Because the ideologies of this latter type are popularly shared, they need not be fully explicit. This makes them all the more difficult to convey to a Western audience, or for that matter to a Muslim one that has received a Western-style education with its accompanying implicit values.

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al-Kitab wa-l-Qur’an: Qira’a Mu‘âşira [The Book and the Qur’an: A Contemporary Reading], by Muhammad Shahrür, followed by Asrar aLLisan al-Arabi [Secrets of the Arabic Language], by AFAR DIK AL-BÂB (Beirut: Sharika al-Matbü،ât li-l-Tawzî’ wa-l-Nashr, 1992). 829 pages, charts. No index. (Cloth). [Syrian edition, Damascus: Al-Ahâlî li-l-Tabâ،a wa-l-Nashr wa-l-Tawzî،a, 1990.]

A PUBLISHING EVENT is sweeping the Middle East. From the Arab Gulf to Morocco a modernist, not to say liberal, interpretation of the Qur’an by a Syrian civil engineer who interprets his own scriptures has become a bestseller. In many places the book is sold out or circulates only in photocopy. Muhammad Shahrür’s The Book and the Qur’an is an unlikely candidate for an Arab world bestseller. Over 800 pages long and nearly half a month’s salary for an educated professional in Syria,the book is banned in Saudi Arabia and—reportedly under Saudi pressure—in Egypt, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates, but Oman’s Sultan Qaboos distributed copies to his ministers as recommended reading.[1]

The Book and the Qur’an reminds US of the power of the printed word. In a region of the world where the constraints of state-controlled radio and television are evident to most citizens, the printed word, even if it reaches only a select audience, retains a particular strength. Books—even long ones—are portable. Their rapid dissemination via photocopy can evade even zealous censors and in the process create a network of trust among borrowers and lenders.

Publication figures for Shahrür’s book are impressive. The 1990 Damascus edition sold out, requiring a reprinting three months later and a Beirut edition in 1992. In Syria, 13,000 copies have been sold, and many of the 15,000 copies of the Lebanese edition have found their way to the Arab Gulf. Despite the book’s formal prohibition in Egypt, 3,000 copies have been sold there, along with a large number of photocopies. An estimated 10,000 photocopies are circulating in Saudi Arabia.[2]

The Book and the Qur’an is also talked about. In Kuwait, a religious bookseller told me that it ،،is more dangerous than Rushdie’s Satanic Verses. Shahrür writes that he believes in the basic tenets of Islam like the rest of US. But not all Muslims have a high level of education or an ability to know Islam. That’s why we have committees of properly qualified scholars, to keep such books out of the hands of Muslims who cannot distinguish between Shahrür’s correct understandings and deviations, especially his errors on ideas of women and the family.”[3] A bookseller in Casablanca’sHabus quarter said that the book did not sell well because it was “an expensive import,” but it was the only title stacked next to his desk.[4] In Syria, Shahrür has been attacked on television, evidently in a government move to placate religious traditionalists.[5]

Shahrür, now 54, began to think of the book’s themes over twenty years ago as a student in Moscow (pp. 45–48).[6] There he was introduced to modem linguistics by Ja،far Dik al-Bâb, who contributed the preface and a concluding essay (pp. 737–829). Shahriir explored his topic further while at the University College, Dublin, where he completed a doctorate in engineering in 1972. He had prepared an outline of the main ideas by 1984 and began to write in 1986.

Compared to what North Africans call the “yellow books” of most traditionally educated ،ulama’, Shahrür’s book is accessible to an audience with a modem education. Although it advocates the use of modem linguistics, there are few references to Muslim and non-Muslim scholars who have advanced parallel ideas. Shahriir refers to classic linguists such as Ferdinand de Saussure and Edward Sapir, but not to Toshihiko Izutsu’s linguistic analysis of the Qur’an or to Fazlur Rahman who, like Shahrur, vigorously distinguishes between general principles in the Qur’an and “mlings upon specific and concrete historical issues.”[7] On the other hand, an elaborate scholarly apparatus referring to texts unavailable to most readers in Arabic might have deterred many readers. As one Moroccan linguist remarked, ،،Shahriir explains modem linguistics atjust the pace needed for our readers. He presupposes only an interest in understanding the Qur’an, and we all share this goal.”[8] Shahrür’s frequent metaphors and analogies, drawn from engineering and the sciences, fields especially

attractive to “fundamentalists” who feel threatened by his arguments, add to the book’s interest.

Shahrur opens with an analogy: “If a man draws a picture of a face with one eye, the viewer will notice the error at once,” but if he draws the image through a minor in reverse, most people will take years to notice the reversal. “Similarly, people believed for a long time that the sun revolved around the moon, but they were unable to explain some phenomena derived from this assumption until one person, human like themselves, said, ،The opposite is tme: The earth revolves around the sun.’ ... After a quarter of a century of study and reflection, it dawned on me that we Muslims are shackled by prejudices (1musallimdt), some of which are completely opposite the [correct perspective]” (p. 29).

This approach appears to resemble Maurice Bucaille’s The Bible, the Qur’an and Science, which in its many translated editions is one of the best-selling books in the Muslim world today.[9] Bucaille, a French doctor and convert to Islam, argues that contemporary scientific knowledge is fully compatible with the Qur’an. However, Shahrür’s goal is broader: he chdlenges the accepted conventions for religious authority and reasoning from scriptures, arguing that until the present, most Islamic writings have treated Islam as dogma (‘aqldd) and rules for behavior (sülük) without entering into their philosophical underpinnings. Traditional (taqttdf) Islamic thought operates in a closed circle and does not directly confront such contemporary dilemmas (mudilat) as fate, foreordination, and freedom (·al-qada ’ wa-l-qadar wa-l-hurriyya); the problem of knowledge; theories of the state, society, economics, and democracy; and historical explanation (p. 30).

He argues that contemporary Arab and Islamic thought suffers from basic problems: the lack of an “objective scientific approach” (al-ba‘th al-llml al-mawdu[10] in many fields, including study of the Qur’an, and the prejudging of issues without objective study, including the status of women in Islam. In contrast to most Muslim jurists, Shahriir writes that he “scientifically” collected all relevant Qur’anic references, suspending judgment on whether Islam or the traditional legal schools have been “fair” to women. This led him to conclude that women are viewed one way in the

Qur’an and another in the books of jurisprudence and Qur’anic interpretation (iafstr) (p. 31). A third problem with Islamic Arab thought is its lack of “creative interaction” with [non-Muslim] philosophies. “We cannot place all these philosophies on the margins and say they are false. We should interact positively with them and without fear.” Shahrür also notes the lack of modem, contemporary Muslim theories of human knowledge, rooted in the Qur’an, which would give Muslims self-confidence and “what is termed ،the Islamization of knowledge’”—his brackets indicate reservations about the process. He argues that much Muslim thought on the nature of knowledge reiterates inherited political and intellectual positions, accusing opponents of “disbelief (kufr), apostasy (ilhad), atheism (zindiqiyya), heresy (hartaqiyya), speculativedogmatism (al-mu’tazaliyya), fatalism (al-jabariyya), and free will (al-qadariyyay and ignoring new approaches. Lastly, Shahrür cites a pronounced crisis of jurisprudence (azma fiqhiyya). “We need a contemporary jurisprudence and a new understanding of prophetic tradition (·sunnay (p. 32).

He is emphatic on the sterility of contemporary Islamic Arab thought, although he hardly refers to non-Arab Muslim thinkers:

If we look at Arab Islamic civilization today, we see that its roots are abundant but it yields no fruits. Today we [only] consume goods and [inherited] thoughts.... We should distinguish between authenticity (asala) and veneration of the past (isalaftyya). Asala has a positive, vital connotation; salafiyya is the exact opposite. We understand the term as following the steps of predecessors without regard for the relativity of

place and time (al-nisbiyya al-makaniyya wa-l-zamaniyya).

The Salafi search for self in a “vacuum” and resemble “the crow who wishes to imitate the sound of the nightingale” (p. 34). The uses the term to

refer to many Muslim activists—mistakenly say that Muslims should imitate the institutions of the first Islamic century, thus limiting the scope of Islam. At the same time, they say that Islam is good for any time and place.

Shahrür argues that they can't hold both positions: the chapters and verses of the Quran do not change but human understanding of them in any given time and place is relative and part of our heritage (turath). "What happened in the seventh century in the Arabian peninsula was the interaction of people in that time and place with the Book. That interaction was the first fruit of Islam, not unique and not the last." Some elements were meant for all time, but others—"clothing, drink, style of governance, and life style"—are the result of interaction with the "objective conditions" of specific times and places (p. 36).

Shahrür distinguishes between Qur'anic verses which are complete in themselves, represent the message of the Prophet, and set outer limits (qyOt muhdkam-at or umm al-kitob) and those verses (al-ayOt al-mutashdbihot or tafsfr al-kitob) which become clear only when interpreted contextually and relative to time and place, such as dress codes. All the verses are God's word, but their understanding cannot be reduced to timeless rules: it requires the continuous exercise of human reason. Nor is there a contradiction between the Qur'an and philosophy.

Muslims have a responsibility to interpret the Qur'an in light of modem linguistics and new scientific discoveries. "If Islam is sound (salih) for all times and places," then we must not neglect historical developments and the interaction of different generations. We must act as if "the Prophet just died and informed US of this Book" and interpret his message anew (p. 44).

Consider how knowledge is passed to a small child, Shahrür writes. Fathers pass knowledge little by little to children, adapting its content and style according to their age and acquired experience. Likewise, in each historical era, the Qur'an must be interpreted so that people can understand it. This purpose is defeated by the jurists, who monopolize interpretation and imply

that their heritage of interpretations are almost as sacred as the Qur’an (p. 60).

Shahrur adapts the linguistic distinction between langue and parole to understanding the Qur’an. Human thought requires language. The Qur’anic text may be fixed, but not its expressive and communicative side (al-dhikr), which must be interpreted for each age and which evolves like our understanding of the universe. The worst mistake of Muslims has been to rely heavily on inherited interpretations. Even relying on prophetic example can harm Muslims: if the Prophet’s example was right for his own age, following it literally today would cause stagnation in knowledge and science.

One of Shahrur’s primary examples is the treatment of women in Islam. This issue can be resolved only by distinguishing between Quranic understanding and later interpretations. In earlier eras, Muslims did not distinguish between Qur’anic verses intended to set outer limits (hudad) and those limited to specific historical contexts {talimdi). Nor should we blame our predecessors for failing to distinguish between the two, he argues. Just as the study of mathematical principles accelerated only with Isaac Newton’s ideas, so too we have had to wait until now to understand the theory of hudfid and its compatibility with what we know of human nature today (p. 592). We should not assume that the liberation (tahrir) of women began with the Prophet’s message and ended at his death. “If a woman wasn’t a judge (qddiya) during the Prophet’s lifetime or didn’t attain a political position, this doesn’t mean that she was forbidden from doing so for all time” (p. 593). As with slavery, not all changes can occur at once. Islam drew the basic lines for freedom and liberation without ruining the existing means of production. If Syria tried to convert its economy to computer labor overnight, Syrian economic production would be destroyed. Women were full participants in the first acts of allegiance (bay’d) to the Islamic community and fought for Islam; no one told them to stay at home and take care of the children. Nonetheless, women’s share in inheritance was initially less than that of men because of their relation to the means of production in the seventh century (p. 593).

There has been a misunderstanding of Qur’anic verses related to women. The Islamic jurisprudence which we have inherited considers the [literal] interpretation of some Qur’anic verses, such as “Your women are a tillage for you” (“The Cow,” 2:223), in isolation from other verses which suggest that women and men are equal in Islam, even if, in the time of the Prophet, men had a functional superiority over women. Thus in matters of clothing and modesty, the Qur’anic injunctions apply equally to both genders (e.g., “Light” 24:30).

Similarly, except for striptease (istribttz) and prostitution, which are immodest, women can practice any available occupation suitable to their geographical and historical conditions, work alongside men, and participate in Friday prayers with men veiled or unveiled, according to local social tradition (p. 623). Some tasks may be more difficult for women to perform, but women, not men of learning (‘ulaman, should decide which tasks these are. Shahriir offers a similar argument, replete with Quranic citations and arguments against certain misinterpreted sayings of the Prophet (hadfth), for women to participate as full equals in politics, including parliament (tamthrl shar’f). “Muslim woman should learn that she has the right to elect and to be elected and to practice the highest responsibilities in the Islamic state, including its leadership, to participate in Friday prayers with men, participate in all legislative and judicial powers” (pp. 625–26).

Is Shahriir’s book an intellectual equivalent in the Arab world to Allan Bloom’s The Closing of the American Mind (1987)9 It is hard to say, because most Arab mass media exercise caution in commenting on the politics of religious thought. There are other liberal voices, however, such as Morocco’s Sa،îd Binsad, who recently wrote that Islamic radicals, by coercing their opponents into silence, seek to “worship God in ignorance.” Binsaid argues that a proper understanding of the principles of Islamic jurisprudence enjoins dialogue, a willingness to understand the opinions of others, and a disposition toward good relations (husnd) with them. This dialogue entails adaptation and the continual renewal of religious understandings within a framework of civility.1°

Trained in both Islamic jurisprudence and Western philosophy, BinsaTd is more positive toward the tradition of Islamic thought than Shahriir, but both share the conviction that there is no contradiction in Islam between reason (رaql), inspiration (waht) and truth (Shahriir, p. 45). Olivier Roy may be sanguine in regarding contemporary Islamic radicalism as a passing phenomenon because of its intellectual bankruptcy, [11] but thinkers such as Shahriir and their widespread appeal show that "political Islam" is not exclusively radical and intolerant.

Unfortunately, in writing about the Muslim world there is a tendency to engage in abstract apologetics or unnuanced characterizations—for example, in our age "fundamentalism is at its strongest in Islam."[12] The intellectual templates offered by "postmodernists" and their critics for the Muslim world might be taken more seriously if fueled by concrete examples of contemporary intellectual debate.[13] The broad appeal of Shahriir's stimulating book suggests that Islamic liberalism is alive and well, and perhaps even on the verge of effectively asserting its voice.

[1] "Prophetic," The Economist (London), June 5, 1993, p. 102.

[2] Michael Jansen, "Syria's Islamic Reformer Outsells Mullahs," The Irish Times (Dublin), August 131993 و, p. 7.

[3] Interview, Kuwait, June 13, 1993. This accusation dovetails with Shahriir's self-image that his book is a modem "reading" (qird'a) of the Quran, not another book on Islamic jurisprudence Çflqh١.

[4] The Casablanca price of the Syrian paperback edition was DH 150 ($15.65). Moroccan publishers claim that it is hard to sell a book in Arabic for more than DH 40.

[5] Jansen, op. cit.

[6] See also Jansen, op. cit.

[7] Fazlur Rahman, Islam and Modernity: Transformation ofan Intellectual Tradition (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1982), p. 20; Toshihiko Izutsu, God and Man in the Koran (Tokyo: Keio Institute of Cultural and Linguistic Studies, 1964).

[8] Interview, Tangier, August 16, 1993.

[9] Maurice Bucaille, The Bible, the Qur’an and Science, trans. Alastair D. Pannell and Maurice Bucaille (Indianapolis: American Trust Publications, 1979).

[10] Said Bensaid, “al-hiwar wa-1-fahm la al-qat‘iyya wa-1-jahl” [Dialogue and Understanding, Not Alienation and Ignorance], al-Sharq al-Awsat (London), July 7, 1993, p. 10.

[11] Olivier Roy, L’echec de ITslam politique (Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1992).

[12] For example, Ernest Gellner, Postmodernism, Reason, and Religion (London and New York: Routledge, 1992), p. 4.

[13] See, however, Michael M. J. Fischer and Mehdi Abedi, Debating Muslims: Cultural Dialogues in Postmodernity and Tradition (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1990).

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A May 2000 conference in Sefrou publicly recognised the impact of Clifford Geertz’s work and professional life on doing sociology and anthropology in Morocco. Yet recognition of his work in how sociology and anthropology were taught in Morocco grew only incrementally from the late 1960s to the present. One obstacle was language. Geertz’s Islam Observed (1968a) was translated into French only in 1992; a translation into Arabic is virtually unobtainable in Morocco; and his book-length essay, ‘Suq’ (Geertz 1979), appeared in French only in 2003. In the late 1960s, Morocco’s educational system was also in the midst of Arabisation. Part of this essay seeks to capture the audience for anthropology in the late 1960s and early 1970s, describing the context in which the writings of Geertz and Gellner were initially received in Morocco. Then, drawing on my experience in leading a faculty seminar in Arabic for faculty in history and sociology and especially a parallel one for graduate students in sociology in 1992, I indicate how Geertz’s ideas and others began to enter the Arabic-language curriculum. Finally, relying on a recent book by sociologist Abdelrhani Moundib (2006), a student in the 1992 student seminar who currently teaches at Rabat’s Universite Mohammed V-Agdal, I analyse how Geertz’s ideas are transmitted in a primarily Arabic university curriculum.

Keywords: Geertz; anthropology; sociology; education; Arabisation; Gellner; Morocco

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This essay traces how Clifford Geertz's work was taught and understood in Morocco from the 1960s to the present, with an emphasis on the period through the 1990s. The May 2000 conference honouring Geertz in Sefrou was a public event that celebrated his influence in Morocco, but concrete understanding of his life and work had already incrementally spread in the pre-Internet era. Especially with the 1992 French translation of Islam observed (Observer l'Islam), reviewed soon after in Prologues, the influential Casablanca review of books and ideas, at least parts of Geertz's work became accessible to a wider audience in Morocco. Already in 1992, the graduate students at Mohammed V University in Rabat participating in the informal off-campus seminar that I led that year, showed me thick binders of photocopied extracts of books and articles, including Islam observed (Geertz 1968a) and my own Moroccan Islam (Eickelman 1976), heavily annotated with notations of Arabic equivalent terms. Today, as Susan Slyomovics affirms from recent visits to Sefrou (see her Introduction to the present collection), affordable CDs have replaced the ubiquitous photocopy machine in making Geertz's words, like those of the rest of us, available to anyone with the appropriate languages — and the knowledge of where to shop.

My intent is to recreate the past in the present, emphasising mostly the late 1960s to the late 1990s, just before computers and the Internet became common. The significance of Geertz's work on Morocco outside of Morocco has been dealt with elsewhere, including in this volume, and I have written an earlier account of his approach to Islam (Eickelman 2005). My focus here is to portray how his ideas and approach were communicated and received in Morocco itself. From the perspective of the 21st century this boundary is artificial, for several key Moroccan anthropologists and sociologists work and live outside of Morocco, including Abdellah Hammoudi and Mouna Bennani-Chralbi. Others, most notably the sociologist Mohamed Cherkaoui, who for years deliberately avoided writing on Morocco in order to

avoid being type-cast as ‘Moroccan’ and to be taken seriously in his chosen field of European sociology (Cherkaoui, personal communication, 2 June 2008), now contribute to studies of Morocco (Cherkaoui 2007a, 2007b).

Parts of this essay are necessarily autobiographical. Clifford and Hildred Geertz arrived in Morocco a few years earlier than I did, but my experience of the time and intensive contacts with Moroccan university colleagues and students beginning in the 1970s offer a perspective on how anthropology in general, and Geertz’s work in particular, were received and changed over time.

*** Beginnings

Telegrams allowed no room for emoticons, but the one that Cliff sent to Cairo in November 1968 confirming his presence in Sefrou added one technically unneeded word: ‘Welcome’ (see Figure 1). That single word sufficed. Christine, my wife, and I had intended to remain in Iraq for two years studying the pilgrimage center of Karbala, but permission from the government of ‘Abd al-Rahman ‘Arif (1966–68) meant little after the coup d’etat that returned the Ba‘thist party to power on 17 July 1968.

Through the advice of an Iraqi friend, who would later become rector of the University of Tikrit, we delayed reaching Iraq until October, arriving in Baghdad after a two-day trip from Tehran with a busload of friendly Shi‘i pilgrims. But we barely lasted three weeks in Iraq and never made it to Karbala. A short stay in Cairo after leaving Iraq uncovered only one project in which an American graduate student could participate — a study of how to get Egyptians to smoke more Egyptian than foreign cigarettes. Morocco looked more promising. In Baghdad, a worn copy of a British Naval Intelligence Handbook for North Africa that briefly mentioned Boujad, a regional pilgrimage center, was enough for me. The Foreign Area Fellowship Programme, the joint Social Science Research Council and American Council of Learned Societies programme that funded my field research, agreed that the unexpected shift from Iraq to Morocco was consistent with my initial fellowship goals.

In 1968, there were not yet any direct flights from Cairo to Morocco. An unexpectedly sympathetic Algerian consul, who first told us that it would take a week to process our visas, issued them within a few hours when we explained the state of our finances. After the flight to Algiers and a night in a run-down hotel, we traveled on two Algerian trains — the last of which had sturdy wooden carriages from the 1930s decorated in the interior with scenes of Algeria. After a border crossing that rivaled those between Eastern and Western Europe before the collapse of Communist rule, a Moroccan train, also with wooden coaches decorated with colonial-era photos, delivered us to Fez in the middle of the night. We arrived in Sefrou three days after our departure from Cairo.

[[d-f-dale-f-eickelman-not-lost-in-translation-1.jpg][Figure 1. Telegram from Clifford Geertz to Dale Eickelman: The one extra word, ‘Welcome,’ that Clifford Geertz sent from Sefrou to Cairo, 16 November 1968, lifted our spirits after our stay in Iraq.]]

Anthropological Morocco was already familiar to us, at least in outline. I took Marvin Mikesell’s excellent course on the geography of North Africa in 1967, and regularly attended the off-the-books seminar on Morocco and related subjects that Clifford and Hildred offered monthly in their Chicago home for most of 1966–68.

Christine and I stayed in a small hotel in Sefrou for several days, and saw Cliff and Hildred almost daily. Once we got our bearings, we left on a bus trip through Morocco’s south, returning via Marrakesh, Rabat and, inevitably, Boujad. In December we began securing permissions to conduct research in Morocco. Part of this task included the formal procedures then in place. The US cultural attache, musicologist, and cellist E. Lee Fairley sent a letter on 19 December 1968 to the Moroccan Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which responded in mid-February 1969 that it had no objection to my conducting a study of Boujad and its region. By that time my work in Boujad was well underway.

It was a call to the Ministry of the Interior that sped up the permissions process. At Cliff's suggestion, as I recall, we paid a call on Patrice Blacque-Belair, the son of an Affaires Indigenes officer in the Middle Atlas during the French Protectorate, who had been working in various advisory capacities in urban planning with the Moroccan government since 1956 (and who in 1970 left for New York, where he continued his career with the United Nations Development Programme). When I met him in December 1968 he was working for Maati Jorio, the distinguished Moroccan civil servant who was then secretary general of Direction de l'Urbanisme et de Habitat. Jorio's boss was Minister of the Interior Muhammad Oufkir (1918–72), whose sinister reputation became fully evident only later. When I saw Jorio in 1984, soon after he became his country's ambassador to Washington (1984 — 86), he assured me that there was a 'firewall' (cloison pare-feu) between the ministry's Urban Affairs division and the internal security apparatus.

In 1968, one could still walk into the main building of the Ministry of the Interior, which was until 1956 the Residence-General of the French Protectorate. There was a doorman of sorts but no directory or names on doors. We encountered a frail-looking French woman — not more than four feet tall in my memory — who appeared to be distributing the mail. Why a French woman should still distribute the mail in the most powerful ministry in independent Morocco struck me as odd. She kindly interrupted her rounds to lead us to Blaque-Belair's office. He told me that Jorio, in the office next door, could give us permission to conduct field research in Morocco, but not to mention that we had seen him first. 'He's angry with me today and is likely to hold an introduction from me against you.'

We knocked on Jorio's door. After a short wait with a secretary, we were ushered into his presence. In my best approximate French I explained what I wanted. Jorio, who was courteous but formal, unsmilingly replied,

'You've done everything wrong. You must go back to Washington and wait for our embassy to transmit your request to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.'

'Monsieur Jorio, we came here by way of Baghdad, and..... '

‘Ah, Monsieur Eickelman,’ he replied, still without a smile, ‘we have no protocols for American students who come to Morocco by way of Baghdad. Therefore I will give you the letters that you need today.’

Finally he smiled ever so slightly and said that he didn’t know where Boujad was administratively. The ministry had just created new provinces and changed the boundaries of others. He wasn’t certain whether it was in Beni Mellal or Khouribga province. He solved the problem by giving me two handwritten four-by-six-inch notecards that would serve as letters of introduction to hand-deliver to the governors at my own pace. He followed these up with a more formal letter dated 13 January 1969, expanding my study to include Beni Mellal — a solution that obviated the need to locate Boujad more precisely.

At no point in our first months in Morocco did anyone suggest that we contact university colleagues, although by mid-1969 I introduced myself to Abdelkebir Khatibi, director of the short-lived Institut de Sociologie in Rabat (1966–70). Andre Masson, the urban planner who was head of the technical division of the Urbanism and Habitat section of the ministry, arranged for me to speak to his staff in February 1970. Beginning in 1972, I returned frequently to Morocco, where I met and kept in sustained contact with a senior generation of scholars including Germain Ayache (d. 1990), who supervised in Arabic the dissertations of the next generation of Moroccan historians, including Mohamed Kenbib and Ahmad Toufiq. At the Institut National Agronomique et veterinaire Hassan II (INAV), I met anthropologist Abdellah Hammoudi and sociologist Paul Pascon (d. 1985). After Morocco’s independence, when French citizens were offered an opportunity to choose French or Moroccan nationality, Pascon had chosen to become Moroccan and trained a generation of young Moroccans in the craft of sociology.

Rewriting the past in the present is always a dangerous task, but there is no record or memory of Cliff having spoken in a formal academic setting in Morocco prior to his departure from Casablanca in February 1969 (Hildred Geertz, personal communication, 3 August 2008, Karen Blu, personal communication, 9 August 2008). This is through no reticence on his part but

the lack of opportunity. Oufkir viewed anthropology and sociology with suspicion and the Institut de Sociologie, then directed by Abdelkebir Khatibi, shut down after three years of operations. INAV, where Paul Pascon and Abdellah Hammoudi were located, was relatively free from political pressure. As with anthropology under military rule in Turkey, where anthropologist Bozkurt GUvenc (personal communication, 1988), son of a trusted senior military officer, kept the discipline alive by locating it in the Faculty of Medicine at the University of Ankara, it was shielded from political vicissitudes at INAV. Princeton-trained sociologist Mohammed Guessous was popular as a lecturer at the Universite Mohammed V, but his intense political activities precluded his writing much sociology or inviting visiting American scholars to make presentations — although he shared his vast knowledge of Moroccan society with anyone who sought him out. To be fair, academics at the Universite Mohammed V were busy complying with a government-ordered Arabisation. Its historians, sociologists, and geographers, trained largely in French (with the exception of Guessous), were fully preoccupied with adapting their courses to an Arabic-speaking student body that was growing exponentially and straining the meager resources allocated to higher education.

On a personal level, Cliff developed strong ties with Moroccan scholars, especially geographer Mohamed Naciri and also Guessous. But in a general sense, social sciences that incorporated field research existed only in the Department of Geography at Mohammed V University, still the only university in Morocco, and at INAV. French and Moroccan geographers produced distinguished studies on Morocco's regions and towns, but in other fields, notably sociology, the focus was more on economic 'development,' which of course included Naciri's work. The vogue among Moroccan graduate students at the time veered more to global studies of economic and political development, in which Morocco figured principally as a 'case.' Several students from the Khouribga and Beni Mellal region who knew of my work chastised me in 1969 for being a 'folklorist' at worst or, alternatively an 'Orientalist,' because I was interested in religion as practiced in a 'dead and dying' regional center rather than a place more representative of the 'new' Morocco. The proliferation of local and regional studies, and a profound explicit public respect for the 'pious ones' (al-salihun) — often an integral part of understanding the meaning of 'home' in Morocco — only returned in the last decade of Hassan II's reign (r. 1961 — 99).

*** On reading Geertz in Morocco

Geertz's first book-length essay on Morocco (and Indonesia), Islam observed (Geertz 1968a), was promptly reviewed in the Annales marocaines de sociologie (Coatalen 1969a). It was the only review in the issue to lack all bibliographic information, but it was an adequate account of Geertz's scope and approach. Paul Coatalen, who also offered brief reflections on Berber society in the Tafraout region (Coatalen 1969b) in the same issue, later worked and taught in Malaysia. The same issue of Annales also contained an article by Ernest Gellner (1969b), 'The tribal system and social change in North Africa,' translated into French by the indefatigable Coatalen, that essentially summarised Saints of the atlas (Gellner 1969a).

In general, the specifics of Gellner's work appear to have become more quickly known in Morocco than Geertz's. 'Qu'est-ce que le tribalisme nord-african?' — the first major subtitle of Gellner's 1969 Annales article — directly resonates with a seminal 1953 essay by Jacques Berque, which in turn evoked Ernest Renan's famous 'Qu'est-ce qu'une nation?' (see Eickelman 1985). Moreover, Hammoudi (1974), basing himself on a close reading of Saints, produced an influential critique that became a staple component of the photocopy collations that circulated among Moroccan graduate students in the early 1990s and presumably in earlier years.

*** Studying social anthropology in Morocco: the changing view from below

In Morocco from March through June 1992, I led a weekly faculty seminar in Arabic at Mohammed V University on 'History and anthropology in Morocco.' My own contribution to the seminar (Eickelman 1993) offered an overview of key works in Moroccan social history and social anthropology, and how significantly the two disciplines complemented one another. Conceptually this notion of complementarity was hardly an innovation, but articulating it in the context of Moroccan universities was a major challenge. I drew heavily on the work of the seminar participants themselves. Most were historians, although a few sociologists and political scientists also participated. I

repeated my own contribution later at a conference at the Sidi Mohammed ben Abdallah University in Fez, an invitation facilitated by an historian who regularly travelled from Fez to Rabat to participate in our seminar. Geertz's name was often invoked and I was occasionally referred to as part of the Geertzian 'school.' Yet the references to Geertz tended to be iconic and not related to specific themes. Admittedly, it was hard to invoke Geertz in the context of an otherwise fascinating presentation on how Europeans and Moroccans manipulated Moroccan coinage in the 19th century. In commentary, however, it was easier to invoke aspects of Geertz's work to pose questions about how Moroccan and Ottoman rivalries played out in 16th- and 17th-century displays of authority. Such conjoining of approaches takes time. One of the seminar's regular participants was historian Mohamed el-Mansour. His 2004 article, 'Moroccan Islam observed,' which uses Geertz (and Gellner) as points of departure to discuss the development of specifically Moroccan practices of Islam, including what he calls the 'glorification of genealogy' and a specifically Moroccan Sufism, incorporates at least in part some of the discussions of 1992 and evinces a close reading of Geertz's Islam observed. Perhaps because of cost and inaccessibility, most of the seminar participants knew about Geertz's booklength essay on the Suq (Geertz 1979), but were not familiar with it.

During the midway break in the second seminar meeting, a group of students waited for me outside the conference room. They wanted to know if they could meet with me. I asked whether they would like to join us for the seminar, as there was space in the conference room. With embarrassment, they said that would not be possible. Moments later, I saw why. Two faculty members called me aside. 'It would not be possible for the students to join our seminar,' they said. Nor would it be possible for me to meet with them separately on campus. As a guest of the university, I was reluctant to challenge them or ask for an explanation of the invisible line that prohibited graduate students from commingling with faculty.[1] Instead, I asked whether I could meet them in my apartment. In the back of my mind, my model was the Geertz-like informal seminars in Chicago's Hyde Park. 'You don't want to do this,' one of my colleagues replied. 'Some of them might be police spies.' 'In that case,' I said, 'I'll get some sense of what interests the police and the quality of their training.'

A few days later, I met with the students in my apartment. Six showed up, and five participated in all of the sessions. The first session, as we all agreed later, was awkward. The students, all men, had prepared a list of 42 questions with little evidence of sequence or order. At the outset, I indicated that just as they had their questions, I had some for them. We got through perhaps a dozen questions in the first hour. Then, after soft drinks, I asked my own. Clearly the days in the 1970s of Germain Ayache meeting his advanced students at home for tutorials were far behind. The students said that they lacked the opportunity for seminars and met with their instructors only infrequently outside of class. After the first two meetings, we established a pattern. The students selected a reading or theme that we would pursue for most of the session. Then we would turn to my questions intended to invoke what it was like to be a graduate student in Morocco in the 1990s.[2] Even if they pursued their studies, they wondered, would their degrees have value? The best that I could do was to repeat what several faculty members said to me during the parallel official seminar: 'The university as an institution has major weaknesses, but as individuals we remain committed to academic life.'[3] They were, I reassured them, getting a good education.

It was during this seminar that I learned that the most committed students in Rabat were meeting regularly in self-directed peer study groups, just as students at Yusufiyya MosqueUniversity had done in Marrakesh in the 1920s (Eickelman 1985, pp. 98–104). They gathered books and articles and discussed them together. I saw very few books in their original format. Most were photocopies, even the Arabic translation of my Moroccan Islam (Eickelman 1989). Photocopies cost less than the original (MAD 84, or approximately $18 at the exchange rate of the time) — and the Arabic version of my book was published in Morocco.

Geertz's Islam observed figured prominently in the student canon and was one of the most dog-eared and annotated of the readings. His essay on the Suq did not make the canon, not out of lack of interest but because copies, even for photocopying, were unavailable.[4] 'Religion as a cultural system' (Geertz 1966) was part of the canon, as was his 'Religion: anthropological study' (Geertz 1968b) and 'In search of North Africa' (Geertz 1971). My 'New directions' chapter (Eickelman 1984) made it into the canon, used, I was told, as a sort of Cliff's Notes[5] (ironically) to make sense of how to talk about

conflicting approaches to understanding Moroccan society. Various articles in French by Gellner also made it into the student collections.

Of the five students in our informal seminar, I learned several years later that only one of them remained in graduate studies. One passed an examination to join the Ministry of the Interior and became a qa'id (chef d'arrondissement) in Casablanca, and another emigrated to Europe.

*** Geertz as currently taught: Abdelrhani Moundib

In Morocco, as in the US, the path to a doctorate is slow. Abdelrhani Moundib[6] was the participant who finished his doctorate in 1994, subsequently published in Arabic as Religion and society: a sociological study of religiosity in Morocco (Mundib 2006). Like many of his American counterparts, Moundib taught for many years prior to receiving his doctorate, and this teaching experience shapes his book. It also indicates how Geertz is presented in Arabic to an audience unlikely to have access to the French and English originals. The 'field' component of his study concerns shrines and religiosity in Dukkala and al-Jadida, Moundib's region of origin, but it is the framing of the argument in terms of the work of predecessors and contemporaries that is significant.

As a Moroccan colleague once said to me, readers of scholarly books in the US and Europe can assume the availability of the books they cite, so it is bad form to explain them at length — even if this remains the convention for doctoral dissertations. Books are hard to find in Morocco and quickly go out of print, so a good part of Moundib's book, used currently also as a text, explains at length earlier approaches to the study of religion in Morocco. Edward Westermarck and Alfred Bel figure prominently in the first 52 pages, including Hammoudi and Hassan Rachik's commentaries on these predecessors. The section dealing with Geertz, Gellner, and myself is primarily from pages 52 to 68, 'Anglo-Saxon anthropology and the development of academic points of reference.' Here, Moundib does more than set out the ideas of others. Of Gellner's segmentary approach, he invokes Geertz (1971, p. 21) to the effect that Gellner offered a ready-made theory for which he tried to make Morocco an example. In the body of his

study on Dukkala (Mundib 2006, pp. 71–194), he repeatedly returns to specific points made by Gellner that relate to his own work, just as he invokes the work of Geertz, Hammoudi, and others.

According to Moundib, Clifford Geertz, Hildred Geertz, Lawrence Rosen, Paul Rabinow, and Dale Eickelman all represent an ‘interpretive’ approach, ‘which tried to understand the nature of the Moroccan social system and to pinpoint the mechanisms of change starting from the concepts of individuals and the cultural representations of their world view and social relationships’ (Moundib 2006, p. 53). Of Geertz in particular, he writes that there are three main levels to his work as it applies to Morocco (p. 54). First is the theoretical level (al-mustawa al-minhajiyya) of religion as a cultural, social, and psychological phenomenon. Second is a religious history of Moroccan society, and third is his field research in the 1960s. Since Geertz, Geertz, and Rosen (1979) is not invoked, it is reasonable to assume that it is the understanding that Geertz derived from conducting extensive field research and that this served as an example for others.

Moundib argues that from the end of the Second World War to the mid-1960s, prior to the appearance of Geertz’s essay on ‘Religion as a cultural system’ in 1966, there was little development in the study of the history of religions. Most scholars were content to rely on the insights of Durkheim, Weber, and Malinowski. Geertz, writes Moundib (2006, p. 54), enlarged and developed the work of his predecessors, so that his theoretical ideas are now part of our shared ‘intellectual storehouse’ (khazzan ma‘rifi), a deliberate play on the familiar Moroccan term that carries the meaning of both government and storehouse (makhzan). Geertz’s idea of religion as a cultural system is then described in detail.

Unlike some American commentators, Moundib (2006, p. 57) gets Geertz right: religion cannot be studied as an ahistorical semiotic subject. It must be understood within the context of continuing historical and social change. Where others see ambiguity in Geertz’s approach, Moundib sees a valiant effort to understand Moroccan history from the time of the arrival of Islam in Morocco to the present. Geertz’s historical account is similar in scope to that of his colonial predecessor, Alfred Bel (1938), but it is radically different in approach and interpretation. Geertz’s interpretation of religion, Moundib

writes (2006, pp. 58 — 59), starts from the assumption that religion is a social institution and its practice is necessarily a social activity. Hence religious belief must be seen in the context of social practice, which for Geertz meant a combination of fieldwork and the reading of history.

Key to understanding the nature of religion in Morocco is the paradoxical link between baraka, a sense of God's grace or spirituality, and a strong secular pragmatism. The history of religions should not be the collection of piecemeal fragments but a history of the social imagination. The idea of possessing baraka based on divine grace or through a genealogical link with the Prophet, reflects a dynamic tension at the heart of Moroccan religious history, and Geertz's invocation of the struggle between Sidi Lahcen Lyusi and Sultan Mulay Ismail exemplifies this tension.

Shaping Geertz's approach to religion to an Arabic-speaking Moroccan audience, Moundib (2006, p. 60) writes that religion comes not only from God, but from ideas about God. As a result, the profound changes in understanding Islam that have been underway since the end of the colonial era should come as no surprise. Moundib cites several critics who argue that Geertz is inherently ambiguous. Moundib replies that this very ambiguity is at the heart of understanding religion in social history. Geertz, he acknowledges, writes in a complex literary style that, while loaded with metaphors, makes reading him a pleasure. He possesses a beauty of expression even if he opens many brackets and brackets within brackets. Geertz's style, Moundib concludes (2006, p. 63), breaks with common academic writing conventions but can be explained by the inherent improvisational nature of comparative religious studies.

Moundib's discussion of my writings (pp. 63–67) affords him an opportunity to continue his discussion of Geertz. Whether I like it or not, Moundib argues that I am part of the interpretive 'school,' although my writing is characterised by simplicity (al-basata) and clarity (al-wuduh). In approach, Geertz and I share a number of methods and analyses. For example, we agree that though field research is always limited to specific places, the key issue is how, not whether, one describes and interprets — a salient Geertzian point.

Here it is useful to point out that Moundib, whether he has a student audience in mind or a more general Moroccan one, faces the same challenge that many academics do in reaching a wider public more familiar with quantitative approaches to social analysis, such as opinion polls and other surveys. Yet in understanding religiosity in Morocco, Moundib argues, Geertz helps us to see that whether it is Salafi Islam, the Tablighi movement, or others, they are understood and interpreted first by shared Moroccan practices of ‘common sense’ and the strong, deeply rooted religious beliefs that form part of them.

*** Conclusion

Of the anthropological monographs written initially in Arabic primarily for a Moroccan audience, Moundib’s Religion and society is more relentlessly conceptual than most of its predecessors in its elaborate discussion of theoretical concepts and the sustained effort to link them to the ethnographic specifics of his study of religiosity in Dukkala. Geertz’s study of the ‘Suq’ is only beginning to percolate into the vulgate of Moroccan university pedagogy. Perhaps only a few copies of the translated version (Geertz 2003) will make it directly into the hands of students, but CD copies are probably not far behind. When that occurs, there will be a pragmatic exemplar linking economic with religious practice at a highly persuasive micro-level. ‘Suq’ does not make for a quick read in any language, as I am reminded by introducing it to a small undergraduate seminar of non-Moroccan students in Fez in Spring 2008, but it is likely to have the same profound effect as Islam Observed. Max Weber’s ideas acquired new currency after their translation into English in the 1930s, just as the work of Jurgen Habermas, once available in English, gained a new life.

Geertz’s Islam observed was slow to be translated and his ‘Suq’ essay had to wait 24 years for translation into French. The nature of Arabic book distribution and censorship is such that I have yet to see, or meet any Moroccan who has seen, the Beirut translation into Arabic of Islam observed (Geertz 1993). But the rapid expansion of mass higher education in the Arab world affords a large and significant audience eager to read what others say

about them — and to learn how to say more in public about themselves. The slow journey of Geertz's work into French and Arabic, accelerated over the last decade by the formal recognition of his work in Morocco, commentary on it, and incorporation into a new generation of ethnographic research and writing as represented by Moundib, suggests that Geertz's work is taking root with a new and expanding audience.

*** Acknowledgement

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[1] In 1997, I participated in a colloquium in Germany where we discovered that graduate students were herded into a cellar, out of sight, to listen to the proceedings. Only after some of the participants discovered their presence were they allowed to join us at least during the breaks. The organisers explained that space limitations prevented them from being in the same room as us. The explanation was plausible, but our first supposition was a particularly harsh academic hierarchy.

[2] Toward the end of the seminar I met Michael Fahy, then a graduate student beginning his work on an ethnography of undergraduate education in Morocco. At a point when his work appeared to be seriously blocked, I managed to facilitate his getting space in a university dormitory to continue his work (see Fahy 1998).

[3] By 2006, Mohammed V University became the first Moroccan institution to complete an extensive self-study, followed by an invited external review (see Universite Mohammed V 2006, 2008).

[4] Soon after the appearance of my Moroccan Islam (Eickelman 1976), I learned from the librarian at Mohammed V University that they ordered six copies for faculty use. By 1982 they had all disappeared from the shelves in spite of the fact that the library did not lend books.

[5] ‘Cliff’s notes’ is a series of annotated summaries of various literary classics that has been popular among students since its first appearance in the 1970s, and is now available online at [[http://www.cliffsnotes.com/WileyCDA][http://www.cliffsnotes.com/WileyCDA]].

[6] ‘Abdelrhani Moundib’ is the spelling in Roman letters. I use standard transliteration in citing his written work in Arabic.

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The twentieth-century Ibadi imamate of “inner” Oman (1913—1955) constituted one of the world’s last theocracies. In a demise unique for the mid-twentieth century, it became assimilated into one of the world’s last absolute monarchies. The 1955 shift from theocratic to dynastic rule met initially with the support, or at least the acquiescence, of most of the tribesmen and notables of the interior. This acquiescence at first appears surprising because the fundamentalist Islamic religious and political principles for which the imamate stood continued to be properly supported. One of these principles for Ibadis was that the imam, the spiritual and temporal leader of the Islamic community, should be the most qualified of available candidates and chosen by a consensus of the community’s religious men of learning and notables, a notion markedly at contrast with the ascriptive one of dynastic rule. Conflict between these two forms of rule is basic to much of Islamic political history and to that of pre-1970 Oman in particular.

The outbreak of a rebellion called the Jabal Akhdar war (1957–1959) in the interior a mere 18 months after the takeover of the region by Sultan Sa’id bin Taymur (r. 1932–1970) at first appears to contradict the notion that the shift to dynastic rule was unaccompanied by profound popular resentment. This essay suggests that the failure of the monarch to respond constructively to shifting popular expectations of what rulers should do, not resentment of the principle of dynastic rule in itself, contributed significantly to the deteriorating political situation of the period. A complementary theoretical goal is to suggest limitations and practical complements to Weber’s[1] frequently invoked typology of forms of domination, which at first would appear to be quite useful in analyzing the replacement of authority based upon charismatic religious principles and consensus with that of ascriptive dynastic rule. Reliance upon Weber’s typology to analyze the shift from theocracy to monarchy focuses attention upon ideal typical forms of rule at the expense of the central concern of this study, subtle yet cumulatively pervasive shifts in popular understandings of “just” rule.

A study of how twentieth-century imamate ideology was practically articulated, a necessary component of this essay, is in itself a topic of

considerable interest.[2] Prior accounts of Ibadi rule have been derived principally from an analysis of idealized theological treatises and the assumption that the local history of the interior and challenges to the imamate possess an “extraordinarily atemporal quality.”[3] Although the description and analysis of the workings of the twentieth-century imamate cannot directly be applied to earlier historical periods, they suggest the comparative contexts and issues to consider in dealing with these earlier periods.

*** The Setting

Oman is unique in the Arab Gulf in possessing a sense of national identity which has been firmly established for well over a millennium and which is not tied to a specific dynasty. A major component of the country’s sense of political distinctiveness derives from Ibadi Islam. Nonetheless, Oman is religiously, ethnically, and geographically one of the more complex nations of the Arab peninsula. Of its estimated population of 900,000 in 1980 (of which 17% were foreigners, a low proportion for the labor-hungry Gulf), roughly 55%~60% of its citizens were Ibadi, 3O%-35% Sunni, and no more than 5% Shi’i.[4] It is reasonable to assume that the proportional strength of these sectarian groups has remained roughly the same for the past half-century.

Ibadi Islam is the third, and numerically the smallest, of the three major doctrinal divisions in Islam, together with the Sunna and Shi’a. In addition to Oman, significant Ibadi communities are today found only in Libya and in Algeria’s Mzab region. Ibadism originated in seventh-century c.e. disputes over succession to leadership of the Islamic community. Almost the sole significant doctrinal difference with most Sunni is that the Ibadi recognize only the Prophet Muhammad’s first two caliphs, or successors in all claims to authority except prophecy, Abu Bakr and ‘Umar. They also reject the notion that the caliphate or the imamate (spiritual leadership of the community) should be vested in any one descent group, even that of the prophet. The Ibadi are often called “the people of consultation” (ahi al-shura) because they select the most qualified member of their community as imam without regard to descent or tribal considerations. If no satisfactory incumbent can be found, the post in principle goes unfilled.

Since 730 c.e. there has usually been an elected Ibadi imam in Oman, but there have been major conflicts over succession and the country has been ruled at times by kinds who claimed temporal authority alone. This is the case for Oman’s current dynasty, the Al Bu Sa’id, which has ruled the country since 1744. With the exception of the brief reign of ‘Azzan bin Qays (1868—1871) of this dynasty, who briefly usurped power from another Al Bu Sa’id lineage, none of the dynasty’s rulers has asserted the title of imam.

Until the present century the Al Bu Sa’id rulers were “essentially merchant princes whose interests and energies were directed primarily to enterprises outside Oman.”[5] For two centuries, from the mid-seventeenth century until Britain’s ascendancy in the Gulf in the early nineteenth century, Oman was the principal maritime power of the Indian Ocean; its domains once included Zanzibar and much of the East African coast. By the mid-nineteenth century it began an economic and political decline. By the late nineteenth century, reduced prices for dates and limes, Oman’s principal agricultural exports, and British pressure to prohibit traffic in slaves and munitions accelerated the economic decline. In the first part of this century, remittances from tribesmen who had emigrated to East Africa and to Bahrain partially offset the precarious state of the local economy, especially in the interior. After World War II, Omanis emigrated in increasing numbers to Kuwait and Saudi Arabia, where for the most part they performed many of the unskilled, “coolie” tasks today performed by workers from the Indian subcontinent. The minimal wages for such work far surpassed anything available within Oman itself. Oman’s economic stagnation was reversed only with the discovery of oil in 1964, its subsequent export in 1967, and the 1970 coup, after which oil revenues began to be applied substantially to the country’s development.

Oman is composed geographically of four distinct major regions, which together are roughly the size of Arizona. First is the southern province of Dhofar (Zufar), a monsoon region in which the settled coastal population and cattleherding tribes of the mountainous interior, some of whom speak South Arabian languages, are almost entirely Sunni Muslims. The Batina region of northern Oman is a coastal plain rarely more than 10 or 20 miles in width. Compared with the rest of Oman, the Batina and its port towns are polyglot and multiethnic, with Arab tribes (Sunni and Ibadi), Baluch

(mostly Sunni), Persians (Sunni and Shi’i), and the Sindi- and Arabic-speaking Shi’i Liwatiya among the principal groups. “Inner” Oman, the region with which this essay is principally concerned, is a string of oasis towns and villages primarily situated on the inner (western) side of the imposing Hajar mountain range, with the addition of the town of Rustaq and smaller villages on the coastal side of the mountains. With the exception of a few passes, the Hajar mountain chain cuts access to the interior.

“Inner” Oman is almost exclusively Ibadi. In 1980 it held roughly 40% of the native population of northern Oman, or roughly 235,000 persons. In 1971 it held roughly 50%, or 225,000, of the country’s estimated population of 450,000.[6] The population of the villages and towns of these oases was almost exclusively tribal, the more important tribes including the Bani Hina, the Hirth, the Bani Riyam, and the ‘Abriyin. These tribes were loosely allied through two major confederations of roughly equivalent strength, the Ghafiri and the Hinawi. The political relevance of these two confederations began to recede only in the mid-1950s. Until the advent of economic opportunities created by oil wealth in Oman and neighboring states, the majority of these tribesmen were settled cultivators dependent upon irrigation, although some tribesmen also owned substantial herds of sheep and goats. Dates and limes were the principal exports, together with emigrant labor. Small subsections of some tribes were primarily transhumant shepherds (shawawl); bedouin tribes such as the Duru’, the Janaba, the Yai Wahayba, and the Harasis owned significant property rights in some oases. With the exception of the Yai Wahayba, these tribes are predominately Sunni, although some of them allied with the imamate in this century. They also inhabit Oman’s fourth major region, the sands and gravel plains of the deserts located to the west and south of “inner” Oman.

*** The Imamate: Formal Doctrine and Tribal Elite

The twentieth-century imamate came into existence in 1913 due to a convergence of factors. One was a religious resurgence among tribesmen and notables of the interior, inspired in part by a weakened Al Bu Sa’id, perceived as compromised by British domination. Another was the ability of the leaders of the two major tribal blocs of the interior, the Ghafiri and the Hinawi, to coordinate their efforts to restore imamate rule. The Al Bu Sa’id

dynasty was saved from military defeat in Muscat only by the presence of British Indian Army troops. The scope of dynastic rule remained precarious until the conclusion of the Sib Agreement of September 26, 1920, prompted by British mediation, which implicitly granted internal autonomy to the region under imamate control and defined the terms of cooperation between the Sultanate and the tribes of the interior.[7]

The imamate was the ideal Muslim state. The imam ordered his governors (‘amils) to “command that which is legal and forbid that which is not, to rule with justice, to take that which is due from oppressors and to give [it] to the oppressed, to protect the weak from violent and negligent uses of power and to give counsel ... just as the prophet Muhammad gave counsel to his community (umma)”[8] These admonitions and similar ones contained in other letters from the imam to men of learning deliberately replicate the caliph ‘ Umar’s seventhcentury instructions to his judges (qadis), a fact underscoring the value which the Ibadi imam placed upon legitimating his actions by precedents attributed to the prophet Muhammad and his first two successors as caliph.[9]

Two key paradoxes emerge in considering how the imamate’s principles of rule were implemented. As with other fundamentalist movements, imamate ideology stresses that the community of Muslims, not any ethnic, kin, or regional grouping, is the primary unit of identification.[10] Although the leader of the community was “imam of the Muslims” and all formal discourse indicated no limits to the scope of the community other than adherence to Islam, the imamate in this century as in the past had fairly narrow territorial, ethnic, and tribal limitations.

Second, the men of learning and notables (iilamcD wa-a’yan) were supposed to select imams for the community on the basis of their moral qualities, knowledge of the Quran and Islamic tradition, and capacity for governing in terms of these principles.[11] In practice, selection for leadership and control of the institutional apparatus of the Ibadi state were the nearly exclusive province of an oligarchic tribal elite, the key families of which managed to maintain their standing from generation to generation despite the apparent political turbulence of the region. For example, Imam Muhammad ibn ‘Abdallah al-Khalili (r. 1920–1954), a wealthy notable who

sold his personal estates to sustain the imamate as its resources dwindled, was the twentieth of a long line of imams selected from his immediate tribal group.[12]

Since the just society of the imamate was guided in practice by a tribal elite, it is important to delineate the bases of tribal leadership. With the exception of a few multitribe towns such as Nizwa, Bahia, Izki, and Rustaq, inner Oman was a region of one-shaykh towns and villages. Leading shaykhly families also tended to be major property-holders, and only these families possessed slaves (khuddam), who worked as agricultural laborers, domestic servants, and private militia. Major tribes also had client groups whose land and livelihood were protected in exchange for their subordination, military support, and, at times, stipulated payments in goods or services.

The ‘Abriyin tribe provides a useful example of leadership patterns and their relation to control over persons and material resources, despite the fact that Omani tribes show a wide variation in specific patterns of internal leadership.[13] Attempts have been made to invoke segmentary lineage theory to explain the tribal structure of inner Oman,[14] yet the sustained inequality of control over persons and wealth in Oman, as in many other tribal settings in the Middle East, renders segmentary lineage theory inappropriate.[15]

The ‘Abriyin have a more visible process of “selection” (intikhab) or approval of shaykhs than is the case for other tribes. It should be noted that intikhab is a key term that some observers have misleadingly translated as “election,” implying a greater sense of egalitarian participation in selection of leaders both for tribes and for the imamate than has actually been the case. For the ‘Abriyin, the notables of various collectivities within the tribe assemble to nominate or confirm their shaykhs. A shaykh knew that he was replaced if in a formal gathering coffee was offered first to someone else, his successor. Since the eighteenth century ‘Abriyin shaykhs have all been drawn from the same descent cluster, suggesting that they fit the widespread underlying pattern of oligarchic control over property and persons which appears to account for the continuity in leadership of most major tribes in the Omani interior.

Hamra, an oasis and provincial capital of 2,800 persons in 1982, is also the tribal “capital” of the ‘Abriyin. Most of the ‘Abriyin live in the region of Hamra, although there are major clusters of ‘Abriyin elsewhere in the interior. The paramount shaykh of the ‘Abriyin regularly visits these other regions, and tribesmen in one locale continue to rely upon those in others for support in pressing claims with the government. In the past such support extended to unified action in the face of intertribal hostilities.

Ownership of land and water resources, even for the outlying regions, is concentrated in the hands of a few members of the shaykhly lineage. Thus, over half the irrigated gardens of Hamra and roughly the same proportion of lands used for seasonal crops are owned by four or five households of the shaykhly lineage. In outlying regions, shaykhly interests are looked after by overseers who frequently double as local headmen (rashids). A similar pattern of ownership prevails in other tribes.

The remaining land and water rights are divided among the balance of the tribe, a significant number of whom own very little. For households without sufficient capital reserves, there has traditionally been a cycle of impoverishment which is caused by the difficult ecological conditions of the region and which still applies to households without adequate cash income for migrant labor. When water resources are low, individuals are compelled to purchase additional rights at high prices, which in practice only wealthy households can do. Others are compelled to go into debt and lose their lands and herds. Persons who lose their lands and herds are generally compelled to become agricultural workers or herders for one of the shaykhly families, or to emigrate in search of wage labor.

None of the tribes of inner Oman was economically[16] or politically autonomous.[17] In varying degrees, all depended upon outside trading relations and the support, or at least the indifference, of the imam and the Sultan. Many tribal leaders, especially those on the northern fringes of the interior, also accepted subsidies from the Saudis. In some periods, including the early 1950s, it was not unusual for leading shaykhs to accept gifts or subsidies serially or simultaneously from the imam, the Sultan, and the

Saudis. Acceptance of such subsidies did not necessarily signify allegiance. [18]

Of all the descent clusters of the ‘Abriyin, the leaders of the shaykhly Awlad Zahran descent group possess the most elaborate genealogical knowledge, with significant parts of it written.[19] They also carefully preserve the documents which give them title to their lands. Although the shaykhs do not participate directly in market transactions—their houses are located at the beginning of the oasis where water from a gravity-fed underground conduit (falaj) first enters the town, while the market is located at the other end where most of the ex-slaves live—they frequently provided the capital and protection for tribal clients to carry on such activities. The fortunes of most ‘Abriyin were linked to those of their shaykhs in multiplex economic and political ways.

In addition to privately owned land {milk), there are pious endowment {waqf) holdings whose rent is devoted to various religious or community activities, such as the upkeep of mosques, Quranic schools, or, as is the case for one village near Hamra, the provision of coffee to every male villager in the guesthouse at midmorning. Most pious endowment holdings originated as gifts by major shaykhly figures. Bestowal of such endowments and attention to the needs of tribesmen and clients were major means by which the control over persons and resources could be made to appear just. There are also large tracts of land called “treasury” {bayt al-mal) lands.[20] In some regions, especially Nizwa and Bahia, revenues from the rental of these lands went to the imamate. In other regions, including those controlled by the ‘Abriyin, “treasury” lands were (and remain today) under the control of the tribal shaykh. Its rental is used to meet what is considered to be the expense of his office, including hospitality on religious feast days and other occasions. In general, these lands are rented to tribesmen at modest sums, so that their allocation was another means by which a shaykh could secure tribesmen as clients.

Tribesmen were highly dependent upon their shaykhs for security of person and property. Anyone wishing to sell or to exchange property did so only after consulting with the tribal shaykh or with one of his agents, generally another members of the shaykhly lineage, acting as judge. Among the

‘Abriyin, the Awlad Zahran lineage provided nearly all the persons reputed as having the education and standing sufficient to prepare a binding title.[21] Intratribal disputes were invariably referred to the shaykh, as were intertribal conficts over water and pasture rights.

The formal consensus among tribal notables implied by the notion of selection is an important component in establishing shaykhly legitimacy. Tribesmen distinguish between shaykhs who rule with the consent of the community or collectivity (jama’a) and those who do not. Shaykhs who make illegitimate exactions or who fail to settle issues according to justice as locally understood are considered tyrants (jabbars). The ‘Abriyin consider their best shaykhs to have been those who possessed both reputations as men of learning (or a reputation for accepting the counsel of learned men) and effectiveness in practical tribal politics. The line between a strong, effective shaykh and a tyrant was often thin, and reputations were volatile. Older tribesmen recall that the most notable achievement of Imam Muhammad ibn ‘Abdallah al-Khalili was to reduce intertribal violence and limit the possibility of some tribal shaykhs for arbitrary action.

The tribal shaykh and his immediate supporters recognize that unpopular decisions which cannot be justified in terms of Islamic tradition will be resisted. Although tribesmen emphasize the unity of the tribe to outsiders, rivalry for control of the tribe limits the arbitrary exercise of shaykhly authority. Other members of the shaykhly lineage can seek to gain support for themselves, or collectivities or tribesmen—I deliberately use the term “collectivities” because lineage identities are only one of several bases for political alliance—may take advantage of potential rivalries to limit the range of action of their shaykhs without formal challenge to his authority.

The concepts of jama’a and consultation (shura) are crucial to understanding popular Omani notions of authority. Jama’as vary in composition. They can be constituted by any cluster of individuals who usually consult with one another before making major decisions. In Hamra itself, to continue the example of the ‘Abriyin, consultation over matters affecting the community occurs daily in the shaykh’s guesthouse (sabla) and in the guesthouses of other nonshaykhly lineages.

Depending upon context, such consultations involve anything from the ‘Abriyin as a whole, individual settlements, or key members of the shaykhly lineage alone. The term is also used regularly in nontribal contexts to refer to any group of persons who habitually work or deliberate together, such as ministry officials. In general, a respected shaykh takes care to listen to all articulate opinion on a matter and to consult with tribal notables before making public his own decision.

*** Imamate Rule in Practice

An elderly ex-militiaman (‘askari) for the imamate replied in 1980 to my question of whether the imamate was a government (hukuma) similar to the sultanate by vigorously affirming of the imamate that: “It killed; it taxed; it imprisoned.” This minimalist definition of government clearly is at marked variance with the formal image of Islamic rule as elaborated by men of learning. Imamate ideology was undeniably important, but few ordinary tribesmen invoked the imamate’s formal principles in discussions with me or among themselves. Several replied that such matters were for their shaykhs and men of learning to articulate, a deference to the received social order. The emphasis of ordinary tribesmen was more upon narratives revealing who was capable of imposing his will in specific circumstances. Nonetheless, most tribesmen showed a clear respect for the former imamate government, even when its effect upon their immediate tribal circumstances was not always strongly felt.

Nizwa was the seat of the twentieth-century imamate, where the imam, his key aides, a personal retinue of soldiers and slaves, and religious students lived in the seventeenth-century fortress complex which dominates the town. In the late 1940s the imam had fourteen governors located at principal settlements to represent his authority. All governors were men of learning. They were necessarily also men of action capable of activating tribal militias in the name of the imam. The imamate government, including militia, tax collectors, judges, and governors, comprised fewer than five hundred persons and most of these were part-time. Salaries were generally low, for it was expected that most persons had complementary sources of income.

The claim of the imamate to rule exclusively by the laws and traditions of the early Islamic community in practice restricted the scope of government activities. Taxes were restricted to alms (zakat) and to an equally modest levy on certain market transactions. Since Quranic schools, mosques, and certain activities were in general financed by specific pious endowments, the only other imamate revenue came from public treasury lands. Even in times of major crisis, the level of taxes could not be raised, nor could pious endowment revenues legitimately be diverted from their initial purpose. A major dispute broke out between Imam Salim bin Rashid al-Kharusi (r. 1913–1920) and his advisers when he sought to expand the taxing power of the imamate and utilize endowment revenues for government purposes.[22] He met stiff resistance from his advisers and was obliged to withdraw his proposal. Even basic written accounting of revenue and expenditures was not introduced until 1952-1953/ 1372.[23]

Record-keeping and the adjudication of disputes was simple and direct. Land and water rights were bought and sold by written agreement, but copies of these agreements were retained only by the parties involved. There were no central registers or even records of tax assessments. In the absence of registries or archives, written instruments of sale were secure only when prepared and witnessed by literate notables. Disputes were settled by the imam’s judges and governors bringing together the conflicting parties and issuing their decision. Appeals to the imam were rare. Serious cases, such as homicide, intertribal raiding, or debts between persons from different towns, were resolved in the first instance by the imam.

The imam had no standing army, but had several resources available to achieve imamate objectives by force. One was to raise a militia against any tribal leader unwilling to accede to imamate requests. The other was for the imam and his counsellors secretly to designate certain persons (notorious bandits and at times certain tribal shaykhs) as “enemies of Islam” and thus “meriting death” (mustahaqm bi-l-qatl). Once a person was so designated, any deceit or strategem could be employed to bring about his end.[24] In general, however, since the imam constituted the embodiment of Islamic legitimacy and reached decisions only after consultation with his close advisers—men of learning drawn from the leading tribes—overt opposition to his decisions was infrequent.

The imamate elite was drawn principally from the leading shaykhly families of the interior. Given the small scale of imamate society, these leaders were well known to one another and there was limited opportunity for leadership to arise from outside this limited cadre. Since the actual course of political events was unpredictable and notables were aware that patterns of domination could suddenly shift, the leaders of major factions and tribal groupings were reluctant to take irrevocable positions. At the same time they affirmed their allegiance to the imamate and sought to justify in Islamic terms their pragmatic assessments of political realities. In the 1954 selection for the imam, many notables avoided making a clear commitment for either the imam or the Sultan because of the ambiguous political situation which prevailed prior to the Sultan’s takeover of the interior in late 1955.

*** Legitimacy: Imam and Sultan

Popular Omani assumptions concerning what is politically and religiously just become particularly apparent in analyzing the steps taken by Sultan Sa’id to achieve Oman’s practical reunification. From the beginning of his reign in 1932, when he was 22 years old, the Sultan began to develop an amicable entente with Imam Muhammad. At first, this policy went little beyond the formal exchange of greetings on Muslim feast days and the occasional exchange of fugitives as mandated by the 1920 Sib Agreement. The Sultan in his letters was punctiliously respectful but never addressed his correspondent as imam. As Sultan Sa’id explicitly told his Minister of the Interior, the use of such a term would signify that he owed obedience to the imam. The imam, however, addressed Sa’id bin Taymur as Sultan in all communications dating at least from the early 1940s.[25]

The Sultan took an important step in the mid-1930s by encouraging men of learning from inner Oman to serve as judges in his administration. Among the first qadis to leave the interior for service with the Sultan was Shaykh Ahmad Sa’id al-Kindi (d. 1963-1964/1383) of Nizwa. After serving as judge for nearly a decade (1928–1937) with the imam, he accepted appointments from the Sultan in varying locales until his death. In a pattern to be repeated

by almost all officials from the interior who sought to work with the Sultan, Shaykh Ahmad first asked for the imam’s permission. The imam answered Shaykh Ahmad by writing that he could serve Islam equally well by working for the Sultan.[26] The Sultan’s salaries were higher than those offered by the imam, and the imam placed no restrictions upon Sultanate officials returning regularly to the interior.

In 1939, Shaykh Ibrahim al-‘Abri (d. 1975), a distinguished man of learning, tribal leader of the ‘Abriyin, and counsellor of the imam, became one of the most influential imamate figures to make the shift.[27] Shaykh Ibrahim soon developed a pattern of working as qadi for the Sultan in Muscat and returning summers to Hamra, where he continued to be the de facto shaykh of his tribe and the imam’s appointed judge. Shaykh Ibrahim confirms that although the Sultan and imam initially viewed one another with suspicion, they soon developed a mutual respect.[28] For his part, the imam recognized that the Sultan sought the wellbeing of the people of inner Oman (qasd al-khayr li-ahl ‘Uman). The Sultan’s predecessors had been popularly perceived as being aligned too closely to British interests, a factor which fueled resistance to Sultanate rule earlier in the century. Sultan Sa’id himself had returned only in 1929 from education at a school for princes in India, Mayo College, and may have been at least initially handicapped by poor Arabic, but he quickly set about diminishing direct British influence in his administration.[29] By insistently drawing upon the same source of popular legitimacy as the imamate—rule by Islamic law—and the same personnel, the Sultan took the first steps to facilitate Oman’s practical unification. In essence he began to model the Sultanate upon respected elements of the imamate.

By the late 1930s, Sultan Sa’id had developed a limited, but in its context effective administrative apparatus. He corresponded with the imam over what tribesmen from the interior visiting the coast regarded as inequities in taxation. He also used some of his revenues, although not always successfully, to gain the allegiance of prominent shaykhs in the interior.[30] The Sultan also became increasingly concerned with securing revenues from oil exploration. Without directly antagonizing the imam, who was adamantly opposed to allowing foreigners in the interior, the Sultan sought to facilitate the safe passage of oil exploration teams in the northern part of the interior not effectively under imamate control.[31]

In the 1940s the augmented subsidies which the Sultan received in return for supporting the British war effort were judiciously used to strengthen his ties with the leading shaykhs of the interior. By 1945 the British consul in Muscat reported that the Sultan had secured for himself the role of arbitrator between the paramount shaykhs of the powerful Hinawi and Ghafiri confederations and had obtained their agreement not to take part in the selection of a new imam. The consul also reported that the imam had sent the sultan a letter announcing the dispatch of an emissary “to discuss ‘important questions.”’[32] In 1946, the imam and Sultan collaborated in establishing joint administration in an area of longstanding tribal conflict, the Bilad Bani Bu Hasan in the southern Sharqiya. The imam appointed the region’s governor, but the Sultan paid for the cost of administration.[33]

An indication of the Sultan’s success in establishing his own claims to legitimacy in the interior came during a critical illness of the imam in 1948, when some tribal leaders reportedly suggested that the Sultan assume the additional title of imam. Sultan Sa’id was fully aware that he lacked some of the necessary qualifications and never personally entertained the idea.[34] Despite the Sultan’s cordial personal relations with the imam, which extended to providing a car and escort to take his sick niece to the American mission hospital in Muscat in 1949, he recognized that the imam’s recovery effectively delayed a major opportunity to achieve the country’s reunification.[35]

Among the Sultan’s reasons for vigorously pursuing Oman’s reunification was the renewed postwar interest in oil exploration. In 1948 Richard Bird, a representative of the Iraq Petroleum Company (which then held an oil concession for Oman) entered Oman as far as ‘ Ibri. Along the way he made agreements with several tribal shaykhs to permit the safe passage of survey teams. Through the collaboration of Shaykh Sulayman bin Himyar, leader of the Ghafiri tribal confederation, Bird even hoped to proceed to Nizwa to speak with the imam. The imam, however, strongly rejected this initiative and forced Bird’s immediate departure from ‘Ibri. For his part, Sultan Sa’id was furious that Bird had entered Oman without his consent. The Sultan feared that the British might begin to regard Oman’s interior as composed of congeries of independent shaykhs. Indeed, in late 1949 Sulayman bin Himyar

informed a British explorer “that he wished to be recognized by the British Government as the independent ruler of the Jabal al Akhdar, with a status similar to that of the Trucial Sheikhs.”[36]

The Sultan wanted oil exploration, but at the same time lacked effective control over some of his domains and was under pressure from the imam to keep foreigners out of the country. When Bird visited Muscat to make amends to the Sultan in November 1948, the Sultan showed him a letter from the imam protesting oil exploration by foreigners and his reply, intended to allay the imam’s fears.[37] Bird obtained the Sultan’s consent to reenter northern Oman with a survey team a few months later, provided he was accompanied by a representative of the Sultan. This time local tribesmen unceremoniously shot at the expedition and chased it away, saying that the Sultan’s representative had no business in the area. The incident was eventually resolved in the Sultan’s favor, but serves to indicate both the “thinness” of his effective control in some parts of the country and his early recognition that boundaries and effective rule were essential tests of sovereignty for international purposes.[38]

The two major tests of practical rule in Oman came with the 1952 Buraymi crisis, in which the Saudis occupied one of the villages of this oasis and claimed it as their own, and with the death of Imam al-Khalili in 1954, after which Sultan Sa’id made his final moves to reunite Oman.

In the early 1950s the Saudis renewed dormant claims to Buraymi and to an adjacent region of northern Oman called the Dhahira (Zahira), which included the oasis of ‘ Ibri.[39] Immediately after the Saudis occupied Buraymi in August 1952, they began a campaign to secure recognition of Saudi rule by tribal leaders in the interior. A message to the imam announced that the Saudi representative was appointed only after repeated requests by Saudi subjects in Oman. It also invited the imam to join with the Saudis in ridding Oman of “foreign” influence; the imam was subsequently offered a large cash gift, which was declined.[40]

The Sultan’s immediate response was to raise tribal levies to oust the Saudis by force, one of the most popular actions he ever undertook. He also

informed the imam of developments by letter. Merchants in Muscat turned over their entire supplies of foodstuffs and ammunition for the expedition. Within the space of a month—a short time considering that all communications were by messenger (radio contact between the Sultan and his three military units was established only at the end of 1953)—an impressive force of 8,000 tribesmen from the Batina coast, most mounted on camels, was assembled at the northern coastal town of Suhar by October 7, 1952. Tribal response to the Sultan's request for support was unhesitating. When the expedition subsequently disbanded on October 18 because of British pressure and assurances that they would find a peaceful solution, the Sultan took care to have the British consul announce the fact to him in the presence of the assembled force, so that the British would be held publicly responsible for the expedition's failure.[41]

When the imam had received the Saudi letter in Nizwa, he convened his key advisers. The imam's initial suggestion was to send a messenger with a letter directly to the Saudi monarch (and not through his representatives in Buraymi) saying that Oman at present had no quarrel with foreigners and that the Saudi presence should be withdrawn to avoid fighting between Muslims. One faction sought to advise the Sultan and the British consul of the letter, so that any reply could be taken in concert with them and would emphasize Oman's unity. Another wanted a delegation to be sent to the Saudi monarch for further discussions, without prior consultation with Muscat. Among those offering this advice were Talib and Ghalib bin 'Ali and Sulayman bin Himyar. These shaykhs appear consistently to have argued for an interior independent of the Sultan in order to augment their own political roles.[42]

The imam finally decided to send two messengers to Sultan Sa'id, Shaykh Ahmad Muhammad al-Harthi, and Shaykh Talib bin 'Ali, with a letter offering his full cooperation.[43] The Sultan informed one of the emissaries that the British consul was unnecessary, and sent the imam 100 camels, ammunition, rifles, and money to facilitate sending his own militia from the interior to Buraymi. The imam's force of 800 got as far as Dariz, near ' Ibri, before a message arrived from the Sultan announcing that the expedition had been called off. Nonetheless, the notion of Oman as an undivided entity continued to pervade the efforts of the imam and Sultan to prevent Oman's Dhahira region from falling under Saudi control. For a brief period in 1954 this

cooperation went so far as the appointment of a governor supported by both the imam and the Sultan.

When Imam al-Khalili died, imamate notables gathered in Nizwa. Only a small faction of older men of learning held to the opinion that the imamate should be maintained just as it had been in the immediate past, with minimal contact with the outside world. Another faction, which included Ghalib bin ‘Ali (soon to become imam), his brother Talib, Sulayman bin Himyar, and part of the powerful Hirth tribe, wanted to accept Saudi assistance. A third group, which deliberately did not participate in selection of the new imam, urged Oman’s reunification under Sultan Sa’id. Among those supporting this course of action were ‘Abdallah bin Zahir al-Hina’i, soon to become shaykh of the powerful Bani Hina tribe (which was Imam Ghalib’s own), and Shaykh Ahmad bin Muhammad al-Harthi of the Hirth tribe, which was divided between support for the Sultan and the new imam. The notables who favored assimilation conveyed the Sultan’s oath that he would take no action against shaykhs who supported Imam al-Khalili, provided that henceforth they submitted to him.[44] Their hand was also strengthened by Imam Muhammad’s withdrawal on his deathbed of his endorsement of Ghalib “after Ahmad bin Muhammad al-Harithi warned him that the succession of Ghalib would result in dissension among the Omanis.”[45]

Despite the Sultan’s overtures, strong Saudi support enabled the faction favoring an imamate in the Saudi orbit to win over some notables of the interior. Others hesitated to declare open allegiance to the Sultan. From their point of view, the lack of a strong response to the Saudi takeover of Buraymi suggested that further Saudi expansion might also go unchecked.

By September 1955 the Sultan was compelled to alter his gradualist approach to the assimilation of the interior. An Egyptian intelligence major had arrived in Nizwa via Saudi Arabia and Buraymi to organize liaison with imamate forces.[46] In late October 1955 the British-officered Trucial Oman Scouts, acting on behalf of Abu Dhabi and the Sultanate, expelled the Saudis from Buraymi. This action cut off the imamate’s line of communication with Saudi Arabia and paved the way for Oman’s reunification. From his southern palace in Salala, the Sultan drew up plans for the interior’s occupation and subsequent administration. The Sultan’s Batina Force, based in Suhar,

occupied Rustaq and there drove out imamate supporters, led by the imam’s brother, Shaykh Talib bin ‘Ali. After four days’ skirmishing, the town was captured on December 17.

In a separate action on December 15, the Muscat and Oman Field Force entered Nizwa and took over the imam’s fortress without resistance. The imam was reported to have distributed arms and ammunition to his supporters the night before the arrival of the Sultan’s force, but the tribesmen immediately deserted and no tribal leaders committed themselves openly to his cause.[47]

To culminate the takeover of the interior, the Sultan organized a motorized royal progress through his domains. It took him across the desert from Salala to the oil company installation in the desert at Fahud; went through the interior oases of Adam, Nizwa, ‘Ibri, and Buraymi; and then returned to Muscat by way of Suhar and the Batina coast.[48]

The Sultan arrived on December 23 at an encampment not far from Nizwa. That evening he asked Shaykh Ahmad Muhammad al-Harthi to prepare for him the draft of a speech, to which he made revisions. With the Sultan present, it was read the following morning to the assembled notables of the interior in the long room in the Nizwa fortress where the imam used to meet with his notables. An estimated 4,000 tribesmen from the interior were gathered outside.[49] The Sultan stressed that he came to the interior to ensure Oman’s unity and to avoid the shedding of blood between Muslims. No direct mention was made of the imamate, but the Sultan said that he was willing to grant an amnesty (amana) to all tribesmen and notables who accepted his rule: “The past will not be brought up again.” In private meetings he assured those who had worked for the imam that he would continue to employ them. The move also ensured continuity in the region’s admittedly minimalist administration.

A few days after the Sultan’s return to Muscat by vehicle (he rode camelback from Buraymi to Suhar), a delegation of 500 tribesmen on camels arrived from the interior at the gates of Muscat and were given special permission to enter. The Sultan personally greeted each participant and thanked him for

his show of loyalty.[50] The incident deserves mention because, like the Sultan’s royal progress to the interior, this direct contact with large numbers of his subjects was not to be repeated.

It was the support of notables, secured with the promise of continued authority and influence for the cooperative and retribution for others, that counted most to the Sultan. Few ordinary tribesmen in the interior at this time had a concrete vision of alternatives to a politics of notables. A senior official in Muscat, the son of a village headman and eighteen at the time of the Sultan’s arrival in Nizwa, described his political perceptions of the mid-1950s as follows:

Commoners like myself had no clear idea of what the “unity” of the country meant. Politics (siyasa) was the business of our shaykhs alone. We did not discuss it. Like most people in the Jabal Akhdar, I heard that the [Sultan’s] army had come to [a village near Nizwa], but had no clear idea why. The region was held under iron control (mughlaqat bi-saytara hadidiya) by our shaykhs before and after the coming of the Sultan. There were very few radios, and most of us thought more of the bare necessities of daily life. This was a time when shaykhs could do as they wished. Everything came from the shaykhs and depended upon what they thought. For most of us, we did not even conceive that there was a choice between imam and Sultan.[51]

Nonetheless, some notables and a few tribesmen of the interior were beginning to develop changing notions of what rulers should do. Some tribesmen had emigrated temporarily to Saudi Arabia and Kuwait in search of wage labor, and were aware of the changes that were beginning to occur outside their country because of oil wealth. Sulayman bin Himyar, Talib bin ‘Ali, and, reportedly, a close relative of Imam al-Khalili made clear to the Saudis their personal interest in facilitating oil concessions. Many shaykhs in the interior initially welcomed Sultan Sa’id because they regarded him as modernist and forward-looking. They saw that their own roles would be enhanced if some of these benefits could be secured for their tribes. They recognized that Sultan Sa’id knew how to negotiate with outside powers over oil exploration rights. The economic situation in inner Oman had been deteriorating for years and was exacerbated by some opportunistic leaders

close to Imam al-Khalili who took advantage of his inability effectively to manage imamate affairs during his final years. Even Sultan Sa’id, rarely attributed with active concern for the welfare of his subjects, was said to have remarked upon the poor health conditions apparent in the interior and to have mentioned his intent to set up a dispensary in Nizwa.[52] It was never established, and in general the Sultan failed to facilitate the modest development programs urged upon him by the British.

In spite of the Sultan’s indifference to “development,” his assimilation of the interior made possible the construction of the first motor road into the region. It was intended primarily to bring supplies by road to the oil camp at Fahud, which until then had been supplied principally by air and a circuitous desert route. Once the road was established, however, it radically changed patterns of trade and brought a rapid end to camel caravan traffic. Clearly such a change entailed economic dislocations for many, but again it was principally the notables who had the capital to invest and the influence to secure the permits necessary to import vehicles—most of which had to be personally approved by the Sultan. Except for this significant change, little more occurred beyond the creation of a few military posts. As one tribal leader said retrospectively of this period: “Sultan Sa’id opened the door in 1955 and closed it again in 1957,” referring to the beginning of the Jabal Akhdar uprising begun in June of that year, 18 months after the Sultan’s arrival in Nizwa.[53]

In 1955 the emigrant Omani community was still modest in size compared with what it was to become with the accelerated working-age male emigration beginning with the Jabal Akhdar war and continuing through the 1960s. Nonetheless there were significant communities of Omani manual laborers and shopkeepers in Kuwait, Bahrain, and eastern Saudi Arabia. A rumor widespread in these communities at the time and believed to this day among many non-Ibadis in Oman was that, when in Nizwa, the Sultan led the Friday prayers in a white turban, signifying that he had assumed the role of imam in addition to that of

Sultan. Throughout his travel in the interior, the Sultan wore a multicolored (sahrawi) turban, as he did on the coast. For a brief period, a few notables of the interior addressed petitions to the Sultan al-

muslimin, a title inspired by imam al-muslimm, but were immediately discouraged from doing so.[54]

The “white turban” rumor is significant in several respects. To the extent that it was believed, it served to alienate Ibadi Omanis, who were aware of the Sultan’s lack of necessary qualifications to assume the title of imam. Non-Ibadi Omanis saw a threat to their own position in any move by the Sultan to close ranks with tribesmen in the interior, given the threat these tribesmen posed to their own security earlier in the century. The rumor also indicates that as late as 1955, Omanis interpreted the Sultan’s takeover of the interior principally in terms of the existing political categories of imamate and Sultanate rule. Only in later years did Omani emigrant communities begin to serve as major carriers of ideological orientations offering alternatives to monarchic and theocratic rule.

If through 1955 Sultan Sa’id’s actions suggested a subtle perception of Oman’s domestic politics and an effective manipulation of British officials concerned with Gulf affairs, the subsequent record of his actions suggests his disregard of slow, but significant and incremental transformations in how Omanis perceived their own society. Sultan Sa’id’s “absolute” monarchy was a minimalist state in the sense that it exercised firm control over only a narrow spectrum of concerns. In the 1950s and 1960s the Sultan often repeated to his foreign advisers this observation: “If Oman’s little rulers are all right, then so is Oman.”[55] The “little rulers” were the country’s tribal shaykhs upon whom the Sultan depended to maintain order. Except for a small military presence and a small network of individuals personally commissioned by the Sultan to write confidential reports on local events, the scope of governmental activities remained what it was prior to 1955. Reliance upon tribal shaykhs provided an inexpensive means of governing the interior, but at the cost of maintaining an administrative system with neither the capacity nor the resources to undertake development projects of any sort or to assess local needs in any significant way.

*** Conclusion: The Changing Basis of Popular Legitimacy

In his takeover of the interior Sultan Sa’id intended to maintain “the Oman that was.” His actions guaranteed the interests and status of the existing oligarchy, provided that they supported his rule. The shift from theocracy to monarchy involved no significant shift in the existing pattern of domination. Imamate justice, like Sultan Sa’id’s, guaranteed the peace and security of markets, upheld established property rights, and lessened intertribal raiding. This narrow conception of justice offered no challenge to the existing social order.

In crucial respects, this attempt to maintain the status quo in itself engendered significant transformations. By the mid-twentieth century significant economic changes engendered by the emerging oil economy began to affect even the more isolated regions of the Arabian peninsula through labor emigration, remittances, and contact with Arab political movements elsewhere.

Notables were for the most part cut off from direct participation in remittance revenues, although exactions were frequently made upon emigrants to provide them with the necessary travel papers. In the heyday of the twentieth-century imamate, shaykhs received regular subsidies from the imam and often discreetly collected subsidies from neighboring rulers as well. Small quantities of arms were often provided in this way and facilitated the shaykhs’ ability to affirm their positions. Outside subsidies, complemented by revenues derived from ownership or control of local lands, herds, and commercial opportunities, enabled notables to maintain a “pass through” system of benefits which provided a minimalist but in context effective level of security for tribesmen and clients. An inability to maintain this system threatened their status.

Since the imam had no standing army, there was a delicate reciprocity between the imam and tribal shaykhs, for the imam’s military strength depended upon tribal levies. The same was true initially for Sultan Sa’id, whose last major use of tribal levies in northern Oman was in the 1952 Buraymi crisis. Some were used in the 1957–1959 Jabal Akhdar war, but they were by then decidedly peripheral to the Sultanate’s full-time military units. The northern tribes of Bani Hawasina, Ruwaha, and Bani ‘Amir continued to provide levies for the southern region in the 1960s, but beginning in 1967

even these were largely replaced by Pakistani Baluch.[56] The Sultan's reduced need for tribal levies may have been a major factor in the diminished subsidies provided to tribal leaders after 1955.

The significant difference between Oman in the mid-1950s and in earlier decades was an incipient awareness of practical political alternatives. Much of the initial acceptance of Sultan Sa'id was due to the perception of notables and at least some tribesmen that conditions in the interior would improve, that security would return to the region, and that the "pass through" system would work once again. Most notables and many tribesmen were aware of post-1955 military preparations being made by imamate supporters in Saudi Arabia. In the face of these preparations, several notables of the interior sought to encourage Sultan Sa'id to take a more direct interest in the region. On one occasion, a governor who was also a major tribal shaykh even courageously participated in a delegation of influential shaykhs who went to Salala on camel to see the Sultan. They were refused an interview.[57]

Royal authority, like tribal leadership, is based in part upon popular expectations of just domination. Another component of authority is the ability to use force or the threat of force. A tribal leader or ruler might be considered to be unjust—a tyrant—but could still secure widespread acquiescence to his rule if the cost of resisting injustice outweighed that of resignation to it. Sultan Sa'id's growing reluctance to see notables of the interior on a regular basis cut him off from a reliable basis on which to judge the events of the region. Quranic-sanctioned consultation, after all, provides more than a means of communicating and demonstrating the legitimacy of the ruler's decisions. It also provides the intelligence necessary for effective rule and commits subordinates to the clear implementation of decisions. The Sultan may have intended to emphasize the firmness of his royal authority by becoming less accessible to his notables or, as some observers of the period have suggested, he may have lacked the resources necessary to entertain notables regularly and provide them with gifts appropriate to their status. Especially because the Sultan had begun to rely upon his standing army as opposed to tribal levies, he may have felt that less contact with all but a few shaykhs of the interior would have no major impact upon his rule.

The outbreak of the Jabal Akhdar War on June 14, 1957, demonstrated the Sultan's inability to assess the country's situation. As early as April 1957 he received reports of landings along the coast of insurgents, arms, and ammunition. On April 24, seven rebels were handed to the commander of the Sultan's Batina force at a northern frontier post. On May 5, 150 armed rebels were reported in the Sharqiya region, and on May 8 they raised the imam's white flag in a quickly aborted uprising at Ibra, the tribal capital of the region.

Among the many warnings passed along by loyalist tribal notables at the time was one from Shaykh 'Abdallah bin Zahir al-Hina', warning the Sultan of imminent rebel landings along the coastal region inhabited by the Yai Sa'd. The Sultan's brother, Sayyid Tariq, passed this message to the Sultan on May 17, and it was radioed the same day to the commander of the Batina Force at Suhar. He was ordered by the Sultan's military secretary, P. R. M. Waterfield, to take no preemptive action and to keep his regiment concentrated at Suhar. Shaykh Talib bin 'Ali and 150 heavily armed insurgents subsequently landed at precisely the locale specified in the May 17 message on the night of June 14. Despite nearly a month's warning, the Sultan discounted the possibility of a successful armed uprising.[58]

Within a month Imam Ghalib's supporters had taken over the major towns of the interior, had routed the Sultan's Oman Regiment (which suffered such demoralization and heavy losses that it was subsequently disbanded), and had compelled the Sultan to obtain military support from a Britain reluctant to engage in new military commitments east of Suez. By August 1957 the Sultan's forces and British units with air support quickly recaptured the major towns of the interior with a minimum of casualties. The Jabal Akhdar itself was secured only after a combined Sultan's Armed Forces-British SAS commando assault in January 1959. Mining of roads and small-scale skirmishes continued sporadically until the summer of 1962.

After the initial success of imamate forces, the Sultan's advisers offered conflicting advice on the course of action to follow. The military were in favor of decisive armed action to eliminate rebel resistance. Some tribal supporters advocated a more moderate policy of amnesty for the principal insurgents, an approach initially disapproved by the Sultan. What followed

instead was a policy of systematic reprisal. Beginning in July 1957, some loyalist tribes were ordered to destroy the houses, date-palms, and irrigation channels of dissident communities, extreme measures that many shaykhs avoided implementing because they recognized that permanent animosities would ensue. The regular army consequently was entrusted with some of these tasks.[59] Some subordinates, notably the Sultan’s brother, Sayyid Tariq bin Taymur, who temporarily served as deputy governor of the interior and liaison with the military, sought to combine firm rule with efforts at reconstruction. The Sultan did not encourage such efforts on the part of his brother, possibly because he saw them as giving popularity to a potential rival.[60] After the submission of the Jabal Akhdar and the escape of rebel leaders in 1959, punitive restrictions were placed on the region’s inhabitants. They were denied regular access to the markets of neighboring towns and forbidden to obtain passports to seek work outside Oman. Like many other Omanis, they nonetheless usually found alternative means of leaving the country. These restrictions were consequently effective only in increasing local resentment against the rule of Sultan Sa’id.

After 1957 the emigration of Omanis to neighboring countries to seek work, education, and political refuge accelerated. By the late 1960s, there were over 50,000 Omanis living in the neighboring Gulf states alone (excluding Saudi Arabia).[61] Even when not directly involved in overt political actions, these sojourners became aware of political movements elsewhere in the Arab world and of the open attitude toward development of the rulers of some neighboring states. The large number of these emigrants, some of whom were able to return periodically to their villages in Oman, accelerated the transformation in popular conceptions of what a just ruler should do. Maintenance of Sultan Sa’id’s regime increasingly depended upon the threat of intervention by a small standing army and reliance upon an older generation of governors and tribal shaykhs who, like the Sultan, were unresponsive to changing visions of social equity.

* * *

The familiar aphorism of Marx and Engels has it that “the ideas of the ruling class are in every epoch the ruling ideas, i.e. the class which is the ruling material force of society, is at the same time its ruling intellectual force.”[62] This dictum is elaborated with greater nuance in Weber’s sociology of domination.[63] Weber makes an important typological distinction between domination based upon interests and that based upon authority. For Weber, domination by interests is founded upon the possession or monopoly of essential skills or resources. Those subordinate to such domination remain “formally free and are motivated simply by the pursuit of their own interests.” Domination by authority “rests upon alleged absolute duty to obey, regardless of personal motives or interests.”

In setting out to analyze the social reproduction of the twentieth-century Ibadi theocratic state and its subsequent incorporation into the absolute monarchy of Sultan Sa’id, Weber’s typological distinction appeared initially useful. The transition from theocracy to monarchy in inner Oman initially appears to involve no more than guaranteeing notables that their “interests” (a term notoriously difficult to define, especially in the context of traditional polities) would not be endangered.

The major difficulty with Weber’s typological characterization, despite its improvement over that of Marx and Engels, is the near impossibility of conceiving of practical situations in which the line between the two forms of domination is not vague and shifting; neither appears in “pure” form, and components of both are always present. Moreover, the notion of “interests” is stretched particularly thin when used to analyze the situations described throughout this study in which a given rule is supported because the cost of resistance outweighs that of acquiescence, as is the case for the Omani political situation analyzed here. Weber’s notion of “duty” similarly obscures situations in which there appear to have been genuine popular sentiment among notables and commoners in support of particular forms of rule, such as existed for the imamate until the early 1950s, for the Sultan in his initial moves to bring Islamic justice to that part of Oman under his effective control, and for his especially popular efforts to oust the Saudis from Buraymi.

This essay has sought to trace overall shifts in popular expectations of “just” rule. Concern with the loss of theocratic rule in the Omani interior was offset in large part by the initial expectation that Sultan Sa’id would preserve much of what was essentially Islamic in the political life of the interior (except for the nature of rule at the top), and would take steps to end the country’s economic stagnation and desperate poverty. He failed to do so. His increasing aloofness and inability to anticipate and act upon the aspirations and expectations of notables and commoners alike contributed directly to the country’s increasingly desperate situation, reversed only with the 1970 coup which brought his son to power.

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*** Notes

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[1] Max Weber, Economy and Society, eds. G. Roth and C. Wittich (New York, 1968), pp. 943–945.

[2] See Dale F. Eickelman, “Religious Tradition, Economic Domination and Political Legitimacy: Morocco and Oman,” Revue de l’Occident Musulman et de la Mediterrannee, 29, 1 (1980), 17–30; and “Religious Knowledge in Inner Oman,” Journal of Oman Studies, 6, 3 (1980), 163–172.

[3] John Wilkinson, Water and Tribal Settlement in Southeast Arabia (Oxford, 1977), p. 138; see also his “The IbadT Imama,” Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies, 39, 3 (1976), 535–551.

[4] Population figures are derived from unofficial estimates prepared by the Directorate-General of Statistics of the Development Council in 1980. For an essential technical review of the various population estimates available for Oman, see World Bank, Technical Assistance and Special Studies Division, Europe, Middle East and North Africa Projects Department, “Field Report: Assessment of the Manpower Implications of the Second Five-year Development Plan, Sultanate of Oman” (Washington, 1981), pp. 202–208 (mimeo.). The estimate of the numerical strength of Oman’s various sectarian groups is mine.

[5] John B. Kelly, Arabia, the Gulf and the West (London, 1980), p. 108.

[6] John Townsend, Oman: The Making of a Modern State (New York, 1977), p. 18.

[7] An English translation of the body of this agreement is given in John Peterson, Oman in the Twentieth Century: Political Foundations of an Emerging State (London, 1978, p. 175. Following the Saudi occupation of Buraymi oasis (on the northernmost fringe of “inner” Oman) in 1952, the Sib Agreement was used to support the case that the imamate constituted an independent government, an argument resurrected in the late 1950s by

supporters of the imamate government in exile. Yet as Peterson specifies, ibid., pp. 174–176, the Sib Agreement makes no mention of recognition of the imam nor the imamate government. The imam himself was a signatory, but only in his capacity as a notable of the interior. Foreign recognition and “sovereignity” were not issues raised by the Sib Agreement.

[8] Letter from Shaykh Salim bin Rashid al-Kharusi (d. 1926), “the imam of the Muslims” (imam al-muslimin), to Shaykh Muhammad bin Salim al-Ruqayshi, appointing him governor of Izki, June 16, 1917. Reproduced in Muhammad ibn ‘Abdallah al-Salimi, Nahdat al-a’yan bi-hurriyat Uman (Cairo, c. 1961), p. 367. Other letters of appointment use essentially the same language.

[9] Professor R. B. Serjeant (personal communication, December 9, 1980) has pointed out that ‘ Umar’s instructions are today regarded as forgeries from a later Islamic period. Nonetheless, ‘ Umar’s instructions are considered authentic by imamate men of learning.

[10] John Voll, “The Sudanese Mahdi: Frontier Fundamentalist,” International Journal of Middle East Studies, 10, 2 (May 1979), 150.

[11] “See Wilkinson, “The Ibadi Imama,” for further discussion.

[12] John Wilkinson, “Arab Settlement in Oman: The Origins and Development of the Tribal Pattern and its Relationship to the Imamate.” Unpublished D. Phil, thesis, School of Geography, University of Oxford, 1969, p. 187.

[13] For accounts of leadership in other tribes, see Wilkinson, “Arab Settlement,” pp. 139–207, and Peterson, Oman, pp. 110–134.

[14] Wilkinson, Water and Tribal Settlement, esp. pp. 165–167.

[15] See Eickelman, “Religious Tradition,” 23–27; and The Middle East: An Anthropological Approach (Englewood Cliffs, NJ, 1981), pp. 81–104.

[16] J. S. Birks, “The Geographical Mobility of a Rural Arab Population: Some Implications of Changing Patterns,” The Journal of Tropical Geography, 48 (1979), 9–18. Based upon a survey of available economic documentation, Marc Speece, in “Sultan and Imam: An Analysis of Economic Dualism in Oman” (M.A. Thesis presented to the Department of Oriental Studies, University of Arizona, 1981), confirms the close economic integration of the Omani interior with the coast and foreign trade for the late nineteenth century.

[17] In this respect, Fredrik Barth, in “Factors of Production, Economic Circulation, and Inequality in Inner Arabia,” (Research in Economic Anthropology, 1 (1978), 53–72, a study of the neighboring oasis of Bahia, is misleading. Barth treats the economic and political “systems” of the oasis as if they were self-contained.

[18] Sayyid Ahmad bin Ibrahim, longtime Minister (nazir) of the Interior (1939–1970) for Sultan Sa’id bin Taymur, related to me (interview in Muscat, July 28, 1980) one instance in which the late Sultan showed him a letter in which a prominent man of learning of the interior asked for funds from the Saudi monarch in order to resist the encroachment of the “British-influenced” Sultan of the coast. The envelope was mistakenly addressed to Sultan Sa’id. The letter which should have gone to Sultan Sa’id presumably went to his Saudi counterpart. Fortunately for the notable involved, the Sultan was only amused.

[19] See Ibrahim Sa’id al-‘Abri (d. 1975), ”“Kitab tabsirat al-mu’tabinn fi ta’fikh al-‘Abriym,” 1961. Manuscript in possession of Jabir Musa ‘Ali, Director of Education, Nizwa.

[20] In the absence of cadastral surveys, reliable estimates of the extent of these various types of land are unavailable. No central registers exift; each plot is locally known by name and is not described in quantifiable terms. This situation of course favors continued local control of these lands.

[21] See Eickelman, “Religious Knowledge in Inner Oman.”

[22] Al-‘Abri, Kitab, p. 160.

[23] Shaykh Talib bin ‘Ali al-Hina’ was responsible for this innovation. Shaykh Talib was a leading figure in the imamate and brother of Shaykh Ghalib bin ‘Ali, who was briefly imam in Nizwa (1954–1955). Both brothers eventually fled to exile in Saudi Arabia, where Shaykh Talib became instrumental in organizing armed insurgency.

[24] For example, in 1939 a young ‘Abri shaykh had a “hit” placed on him by the imam. His assassins in the oasis of al-Nakhl (where he was at the time) killed the wrong man by mistake, so that the ‘Abri managed to escape. He later managed to reverse the imam’s decision (interview, June 22, 1980). The imam also sought unsuccessfully to arrange for the Bani Hina to kill Shaykh Sulayman bin Himyar who, although ostensibly a supporter of the imamate, frequently acted against its policies. Shaykh Sulayman was too powerful for the imam to challenge directly (interview, Sayyid Ahmad Ibrahim, Muscat, August 30, 1980).

[25] Interview, Sayyid Ahmad Ibrahim, Muscat, July 28, 1980.

[26] Interview with Shaykh Ahmad’s son, Shaykh Sa’id Ahmad al-Kindi, Nizwa, June 1, 1980.

[27] Shaykh Ibrahim’s move may have been prompted by a major disagreement with the imam. In 1939 Shaykh Ibrahim was accused of “making war against Islam” (i.e., defying the imam’s authority) by not

delivering to the imam some ‘Abriyin accused of initiating a serious intertribal dispute. Shaykh Ibrahim was imprisoned in the Nizwa fortress for several months for this alleged offense before being pardoned by the imam. He subsequently became reconciled with the imam and by 1945 had become chief qadi of Muscat. Shaykh Ibrahim provides his own account of the 1939 incident in Kitab, pp. 131–132.

[28] Al-‘Abri, Kitab, p. 133.

[29] An evaluation of Sayyid Sa’id’s competence in Arabic as of 1926 is found in India Office [IO], R/15/6/55, Burrett to Political Resident, Bushire, March 30, 1926. Soon after this assessment, the Sultan’s Arabic improved rapidly.

[30] See IO, R/15/6/357, “Muscat Intelligence Summary for 1–16 January 1936,” for a report of correspondence from the imam concerning taxes levied at the coastal town of Sur; and the Intelligence Summary for 16–31 July 1939 for reports of the Sultan’s gifts to shaykhs of the interior and countersubsidies from the imam made possible by a large gift from Omanis in Zanzibar. For a contemporary British appraisal of the first years of his rule, see IO, R/15/6/216, “Note on the position and personality of Sultan Said,” August 16, 1937.

[31] 1O, R/15/6/211. Consul to Political Resident, Bushire, January 4, 1941. In a telegram to the Sultan in Karachi (where he was on vacation) on January 30, 1941, the British consul in Muscat reported that the imam had just succeeded in appointing a governor in ‘Ibri, which except for Buraymi is the northernmost oasis of the interior. This advance on the part of the imam was important because of the limits it placed upon renewed oil exploration.

[32] IO (telegram), R.l, May 28, 1945, cited in Peterson, Oman, p. 54.

[33] Interview, Sayyid Muhammad bin Ahmad, August 31, 1980. In a related incident which illustrates the intricacy of the politics of traditional legitimacy,

Shaykh ‘Isa bin Salih al-Harthi, paramount shaykh (tamima) of the powerful Hirth tribe of the Sharqiya, died in 1946. In the ensuing struggle for tribal leadership, the imam eventually favored one successor among the various contenders from the tribe’s elite. The imam appointed Shaykh Ahmad Muhammad al-Harthi, one of the contenders for leadership of the Hirth, as the first governor of Bilad Bani Bu Hasan. The appointment isolated Shaykh Ahmad from the struggle over Hirth leadership, but its unintended consequence was to establish a close working relationship between him and the Sultan. Shaykh Ahmad was later to play a leading role in furthering Sultan Sa’id’s assimilation of the interior.

[34] In the 1960s, the Sultan characterized assertions of his candidacy as “nonsense” (Peterson, Oman, p. 194), a notion confirmed by Sayyid Ahmad Ibrahim (interview, Muscat, July 28, 1980) and others.

[35] IO, R/15/6/361, Muscat Intelligence Summary for October 16–31, 1948; Foreign Office 371/82166, Chauncey to Political Resident, July 12, 1950.

[36] Wilfred Thesiger, Arabian Sands (Harmondsworth, 1964), p. 324.

[37] R/15/6/389, letter from Bird to Political Agent, Muscat, November 14, 1948.

[38] The original reports and correspondence concerning this incident are located in the Buraymi file, Folder 1 (February 18, 1948 to February 3, 1952) of the Petroleum Development Oman [PDO] archives, Petroleum Museum, Mina al-Fahal, Muscat. For another account of Bird’s visit, see J. B. Kelly, Eastern Arabian Frontiers (New York and London, 1964), p. 40. Brigadier Colin Maxwell, who has served in Oman’s armed forces since 1952 and who was personally responsible for surveying Oman’s northern and southern frontiers on behalf of Sultan Sa’id, states that the Sultan was keenly aware of the significance of boundary issues and carefully preserved all documents related to them. Interviews with Brigadier Maxwell, October 7, 1980, and December 13, 1982.

[39] R/15/8/62/51, telegram, Chauncey to Political Resident, June 22, 1951, See also Kelly, Frontiers, p. 160.

[40] This letter and related ones were published in Arabic in a Karachi newspaper, al-Arab, January-February 1953. Translations were made by the Iraq Petroleum Company, (PDO, Henderson to British Residency, Bahrain, DO/PCC.2-A/3445, March 23, 1953). Henderson surmised that the correspondence was probably “leaked” from the imam’s side; the Sultan made no copies available. The original Arabic texts were not preserved in the PDO archives. To confirm the authenticity of the letters, 1 retranslated the texts into Arabic in December 1982 for one of the imam’s former advisers, who stated that the retranslation approximated the letters he saw in 1952.

[41] lnterviews, Brig. Colin Maxwell, October 7, 1980, and December 13, 1982; letter to author dated March 5, 1983. See also Peterson, Oman, p. 68.

[42] See IO, R/15/8/62/51, Political Resident, Bahrain to Foreign Office, December 19, 1950, for an account of the first of Sulayman bin Himyar’s repeated attempts throughout the 1950s to sell oil exploration rights to the interior.

[43] The letter translated in the PDO archives is dated September 27, 1952/ Muharram 8, 1372. Details of the imam’s assembly to discuss the Saudi letter are from Shaykh Ahmad Muhammad al-Harthi, interview, Muscat, November 17, 1982. See also Kelly, Frontiers, p. 161.

[44] lnterview, Shaykh Ahmad Muhammad al-Harthi, Muscat, November 18, 1982.

[45] Peterson, Oman, p. 194, citing a 1975 letter from Shaykh Muhammad ibn ‘Abdallah al-Salimi.

[46] Ibri area report for September 1955 (Boyle), PDO archives; interview, Col. Malcolm Dennison, Muscat, October 9, 1980.

[47] Letter, Brig. Colin Maxwell, March 5, 1983; ‘Ibri representative’s report for December 1955 (Boyle), January 11, 1956, PDO archives.

[48] Shaykh Ahmad Muhammad al-Harthi, later to assume temporary control of the fortress at Nizwa and to play a significant if usually indirect role in its administration, was one of the few leaders of the interior consulted in advance by the Sultan. For a journalist’s account of the trip, see James Morris, Sultan in Oman (New York, 1957).

[49] The Sultan himself did not read the speech. He handed it to Shaykh Ahmad al-Harthi in front of the assembled notables to read on his behalf. Interview with Shaykh Ahmad, Muscat, November 18, 1982. Some of those present later informed a British officer present in Nizwa at the time that “the Sultan made a powerful and terrifying impact” (letter to author from Brig, [ret.] Malcolm Dennison, March 23, 1983). Later in Nizwa the Sultan personally delivered a short speech to the Muscat and Oman Field Force (Morris, Sultan, p. 81).

[50] Abdallah ‘Ali al-Qatbi, now Undersecretary of the Ministry of the Interior, participated as a youth in this expedition to Muscat. 1 am grateful to him for his account of the event (interview, Muscat, November 15, 1982).

[51] lnterview, Muscat, October 27, 1982.

[52] Morris, Sultan, p. 79.

[53] Interview with a major tribal leader, Muscat, October 23, 1982.

[54] lnterview with a governor for the former Sultan, Muscat, September 1980; interviews, Omanis resident in Bahrain and Kuwait in the 1950s, Muscat, November 1982.

[55] lnterview, Brig. Colin Maxwell, Muscat, December 14, 1982.

[56] Letter, Brig. Colin Maxwell, March 5, 1983.

[57] lnterview, Muscat, October 1982. It is useful to speculate that since a shaykh-dominated tribal militia offered no effective competition to the British-officered armed forces, advocacy of a negotiated end to the insurgency would have enhanced the influence of loyalist shaykhs of the interior over the Sultan and his policies. It should be added that in 1960 British Political Residency officials, acting on behalf of the Sultan, initiated an unsuccessful series of meetings with rebel leaders in Beirut to seek an end to the insurgency (Peterson, Oman, pp. 184–185).

[58] Letter, Brig. Colin Maxwell, March 5, 1983.

[59] lnterview with a loyalist shaykh, March 1980.

[60] lnterview, Brig. Malcolm Dennison, Muscat, October 20, 1982.

[61] Peterson, Oman, p. 207.

[62] Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, The German Ideology (New York, 1970), p. 64.

[63] Weber, Economy and Society, pp. 943–945.

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#topics

#notes This is a simple google translation.

In American English, '9/11' (September 11) also corresponds to the telephone number used nationwide to call for emergency assistance. '9/11' drew the attention of everyone, not just politicians, academics, journalists and intellectuals, to the fragile relationships on which our modern societies are built, and provided an opportunity to rethink everyday assumptions about the role of religion and culture in politics.

A century or two from now, historians will look back on our times and investigate how abstract ideas such as "West versus the Rest" have held up in the era of globalization, where both people and ideas are constantly on the move. They will write that the theme of "West versus the Rest" came to the fore in the early 1990s after the Cold War, and transformed the previous strategic polarization of the superpowers into a cultural and religious bloc. This conceptualization is more satisfactory than the rival "end of ideology" thesis, which was also developed after the Cold War. We all see better now that ideology continues to be important in the formation of political and strategic ideas.

On the positive side, the "West versus Others" thesis brought religion and culture back into the realm of international political and strategic thought. On the negative side, it overestimated their importance and power. For example, it led to the perception of the world, where Muslims are the majority, as a monolithic bloc. Thinking in black and white patterns leads to the disregard of points of convergence and gray areas. If there is one single proof of the flaws of thinking about the Muslim world solely in terms of polar opposites, it is the experience of the Turks with the West.

Turkey has continuously oriented itself towards the West since the early years of the Ottoman Empire. For almost six centuries, Ottoman rule brought together different beliefs and cultures from three continents – Europe, Asia and Africa – while allowing them to maintain their differences to a much greater degree than their European contemporaries. The increase in Western dominance further accelerated the desire of the Ottomans/Turks to resemble Europe. Starting in the 19th century, Ottoman reformers consciously sought to be both Western and Muslim.

The Kemalist revolution of the 1920s accelerated Turkey’s process of identifying with the West, while officially ending the Ottoman Empire. This process was realized not only through the actions and support of Turkey’s political leaders but also through the actions and support of its ordinary citizens. Especially in the last half of the twentieth century, the rapidly rising level of education, labor migration and increasingly broad and accessible means of communication greatly intensified the circulation of ideas and people. As a result, the transformation of Turkish society accelerated and the public debate about Turkey’s identity came to the fore.

Turkey’s political and cultural elites rightly present Turkey as both a Western and Islamic country. However, understanding the West as a single type is at least as risky as understanding Islam as a single type. Therefore, Jacobin's understanding of secularism should not be the only model for Turkey. Like all other religions, Islam is not a single type, neither in its expression nor in its practice. Public debate and discussion are fundamental elements of Islam. Some radicals – like other religions, Islam has its extremists – want to silence its opponents by force. However, the vast majority of Muslims say that a truly understood Islam requires a willingness to understand the views of

others and to tolerate differences, and a dialogue. Such dialogue – both within Muslims and between Muslims and others – leads to adaptation and the continuous renewal of religious understandings within a civilized framework. Civility and tolerance are the main characteristics of Islam in the modern world. These social virtues also lie at the core of a successful practice of secularism.

Some of the strongest advocates of political secularism in European history were inspired by their faith. This was also the case in parts of Germany and Scandinavia before the 19th century. More recently, the Solidarity Movement in Poland was religiously based. Its aim was not to abolish the principle of secular democracy, but to strengthen civil society. Poland continues to live as a deeply religious country, but it is also deeply secular.

America prides itself on being a secular state, but – contrary to the images Hollywood presents of our country – it is also a deeply religious country, and religion and state are often separated by a thin line. Today, every session of Congress opens with prayers read by Christian, Jewish and Muslim clergy, and our presidents are seen consulting with spiritual leaders in times of crisis. Our elected officials are the ones who are the voices of their constituents. They always take into consideration their sensitivities.

Turkey and America have an important feature in common. Both countries are strongly secular in their constitutions and practices. Both are deeply religious. The religious leaders of both countries affirm the virtues of secular governance and do not want anything else. Indeed, some Muslim thinkers, such as Muhammad Shahrur from Syria, Sadık Javad Süleyman from the Arabian Gulf, and Fethullah Gülen from Turkey, argue that Islam and democracy completely overlap and that Islam does not determine any particular form of governance.

After the collapse of the USSR, most of the newly established Turkic states envisioned Turkey as a model for themselves. Especially after 9/11, Turkey has had the opportunity to be a model for other Muslim-majority societies, and even many other countries, to an extent that has not been granted until now. However, Turkey can only present an example to the world that brings

together Western democratic values and Islam by creating a civil society that is increasingly strong and where the state and religion are not seen as enemies. For there is no place for militant secular radicalism or militant religious radicalism in either 'Western' or 'Muslim' societies.

Democracy is a process, not a fixed outcome. Democracy in America, like all other democratic countries, was not established overnight; it is certainly not a piece of cake. It took America nearly two centuries to integrate all elements of its own society into the system. Turkey has struggled to develop its own democratic practice, and it is still exploring how religious voices and values can strengthen the secular order rather than weaken it. The good news is that these discussions in Turkey are increasingly open to the public. Increased transparency bodes well for Turkey's emergence as a Muslim democracy that fully complies with the notion of secular governance.

*** Original Turkish: Batı ve Ötekiler Arasında Türkiye

Amerikan İngilizce'sinde '9/11' (11 Eylül), acil yardım çağrısında bulunmak için ülke çapında kullanılan telefon numarasına da tekabül eder. '9/11', sadece siyasetçilerin, akademisyenlerin, gazetecilerin ve aydınların değil, herkesin dikkatini modern toplumlarımızın üzerinde tesis edildiği kırılgan ilişkilere celbetti ve din ile kültürün siyasetteki rolü hususundaki gündelik varsayımları yeniden düşünme fırsatı verdi.

Günümüzden bir iki asır sonra tarihçiler, yaşadığımız zamanlara dönüp bakacak ve hem insanların hem fikirlerin sürekli hareket ettiği küreselleşme devrinde "Ötekilere karşı Batı" (West versus the Rest) gibi soyut düşüncelerin nasıl olup da tutunduğunu araştıracaklar. "Ötekilere karşı Batı" temasının Soğuk Savaş'tan sonra 1990'ların başında ön plana çıktığını ve süper güçlerin evvelki stratejik kutuplaşmalarını, kültürel ve dini bloklaşmaya dönüştürdüğünü yazacaklar. Bu kavramsallaştırma, Yine Soğuk Savaş sonrasında geliştirilmiş olan rakip 'ideolojinin sonu' (end of ideology) tezine

göre daha doyurucudur. Hepimiz, politik ve stratejik düşüncelerin oluşumunda ideolojinin önemini koruduğunu şimdi daha iyi görüyoruz.

Olumlu yönden bakılacak olursa, "Ötekilere karşı Batı" tezi, uluslararası siyaset ve strateji düşünce alanına din ve kültürü yeniden taşıdı. İşin negatif yanı ise, bunların önemini ve gücünü olduğundan fazla göstermesiydi. Mesela Müslümanların çoğunlukta olduğu dünyanın tek tip (monolithic) bir blok gibi telakki edilmesine vesile oldu. Siyah–beyaz kalıplarla düşünmek, birbirine yaklaşma noktalarının ve gri alanların göz ardı edilmesine sebebiyet verir. Eğer Müslüman dünyası konusunda sırf kutupsal zıtlıklar cinsinden düşünmenin kusurlarına tek bir delil aranıyorsa, işte o da Türklerin Batı ile olan tecrübesidir.

Türkiye, daha Osmanlı'nın ilk kuruluş yıllarından itibaren kendisini sürekli olarak Batı'ya yöneltmiştir. Osmanlı yönetimi, neredeyse altı asır boyunca üç kıtada –Avrupa, Asya ve Afrika– farklı inanç ve kültürleri bir araya getirirken, onlara Avrupalı muasırlarından çok daha ileri derecede farklılıklarını koruma imkanı vermiştir. Batı hakimiyetinin artması Osmanlı/Türklerin Avrupa'ya benzeme arzusunu daha da hızlandırmıştır. Osmanlı reformcuları 19'uncu yüzyıldan başlayarak şuurlu olarak hem Batılı hem Müslüman olma arayışına girmişlerdir.

1920'lerdeki Kemalist devrimi, Türkiye'nin kendini Batı'yla özdeşleştirme sürecini hızlandırırken, Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'na resmen son verdi. Bu süreç, sırf Türkiye'nin siyasi liderleri vesilesiyle değil, sade vatandaşlarının da eylem ve destekleriyle gerçekleşti. Özellikle yirminci asrın son yarısında hızla yükselen eğitim düzeyi, işgücü göçü ve giderek artan derecede geniş ve ulaşılabilir iletişim imkanları, fikirlerin ve insanların dolaşımını çok yoğunlaştırdı. Bunun sonucunda, Türk toplumunun dönüşümü hızlandı ve kamuoyunda Türkiye'nin kimliği ile ilgili tartışma ön plana çıktı.

Türkiye'nin siyasi ve kültürel elitleri, Türkiye'yi haklı olarak hem Batı hem de İslam ülkesi olarak takdim ediyorlar. Ne var ki, Batı'nın tek tip olarak anlaşılması, en az İslam'ın tek tip olarak anlaşılması kadar riskli. Bundan dolayı, Jakobin laiklik anlayışı Türkiye için tek model olmamalıdır. Tüm diğer dinler gibi İslam da, ne ifade biçiminde ne de uygulamada tek tip değildir.

Halka açık müzakere ve tartışma, İslam'ın temel unsurlarındandır. Bazı radikaller –başka dinlerde olduğu gibi, İslam'ın da kendi aşırıcıları vardır– muhaliflerini zorla susturmak isterler. Ancak Müslümanların büyük çoğunluğu, gerçek manasıyla anlaşılan bir İslam'ın, başkalarının görüşlerini anlama ve farklılığa müsamaha etme yönünde istekliliği ve diyaloğu emrettiğini söyler. Böyle bir diyalog –gerek Müslümanlar içinde, gerekse Müslümanlarla diğerleri arasında– adaptasyona ve dini anlayışların medeni çerçevede sürekli yenilenmesine vesile olur. Medenilik ve tolerans, modern dünyada İslam'ın ana özelliklerindendir. Başarılı bir laiklik pratiğinin özünde de bu toplumsal faziletler yatar.

Avrupa tarihinde siyasal laikliğin en güçlü savunucularının bir kısmı imanlarından ilham almıştı. 19. yüzyıldan önce Almanya'nın bir kesimi ve İskandinavya için de durum buydu. Daha yakın zamanlara gelecek olursak; Polonya'daki Dayanışma Hareketi dinî temele dayanıyordu. Amacı, laik demokrasi prensibini kaldırmak değil, sivil toplumu güçlendirmekti. Polonya halihazırda son derece dindar bir ülke olarak hayatiyetini sürdürmektedir; ama aynı zamanda son derecede laiktir.

Amerika laik bir devlet olmakla gurur duyar, fakat –Hollywood'un ülkemizle ilgili sunduğu imajların aksine– aynı zamanda oldukça da dindar bir ülkedir; ve din ile devlet çoğu zaman ince bir çizgiyle birbirinden ayrılır. Bugün Kongre'nin her oturumu Hıristiyan, Musevi ve Müslüman din adamlarının okuduğu dualarla açılmaktadır ve başkanlarımızın kriz zamanlarında ruhani önderlere danıştığı görülür. Seçilmişlerimiz, seçmen tabanlarının dini hassasiyetlerini daima göz önünde bulundururlar.

Türkiye ve Amerika mühim bir ortak özelliğe sahip. İki ülke de anayasaları ve pratikleri ile güçlü şekilde laiktir. İkisi de oldukça dindardır. Her iki ülkedeki dinî liderlerin cumhuru, laik idarenin faziletlerini tasdik etmekte ve başka bir şey istememektedir. Haddizatında, mesela Suriye'den Muhammed Şahrur, Arap Körfezi'nden Sadık Cevad Süleyman ve Türkiye'den Fethullah Gülen gibi bazı Müslüman düşünürler, İslam ve demokrasinin tamamen birbiriyle örtüştüğünü ve İslam'ın herhangi bir idare biçimi tayin etmediğini savunur.

SSCB'nin yıkılışından sonra yeni kurulan Türki devletlerin çoğu Türkiye'yi kendisine bir model olarak tahayyül etti. Özellikle 11 Eylül sonrasında Türkiye, diğer Müslüman çoğunluğa sahip toplumlara, hatta başka birçok ülkeye model olma fırsatını şimdiye kadar nasip olmadık ölçüde yakaladı. Lakin Türkiye, ancak devlet ile dinin birbirine hasım olarak görülmediği ve giderek güçlenen bir sivil toplum oluşturmak suretiyle dünyaya Batılı demokratik değerlerle İslam'ı buluşturan bir örnek sunabilir. Zira ne 'Batılı' ne de 'Müslüman' toplumlarda, militan laik radikalizmine de, militan dindar radikalizmine de yer yoktur.

Demokrasi, sabit bir netice değil, bir süreçtir. Diğer tüm demokratik ülkeler gibi Amerika'da da demokrasi bir gecede kurulmamıştır; çantada keklik ise hiç değildir. Kendi toplumunun tüm unsurlarını sisteme entegre etmek, Amerika'nın yaklaşık iki asrını almıştır. Türkiye düşe kalka kendi demokrasi pratiğini geliştirmeye çalıştı, ve hâlâ dindar seslerin ve değerlerin rejimi zayıflatmaktan ziyade laik düzeni nasıl güçlendirebileceğini araştırıyor. İyi haber şu ki, Türkiye'deki bu tartışmalar giderek daha da fazla kamuoyuna açık yapılıyor. Şeffaflığın artması, Türkiye'nin laik idare nosyonuna tamamen uyan bir Müslüman demokrasi olarak zuhuru yönünde hayra alamet.

Replies

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[Abstract]

The anthropology of bureaucracy should address the role of organized power in orchestrating complex and unequal societies. This article reviews the development of bureaucracy studies, focusing on the thinking done by bureaucrats in their efforts to control the actions of others. Then the central concept of thought-work is placed within a series of queries about levels and relationships of power, with particular attention to the encompassing classifications and assumptions embodied in organizational worldviews. The worldviews of officers of the United States Immigration and Naturalization Service, examined as a case study, are found to give cohesion to a contradictory policy that balances publicly visible arrests and invisible but effective perpetuation of undocumented labor migration. Human rights abuses and avoidance of abuses are both explainable as outcomes of these thought-work routines. A stronger theoretical approach to organized power enhances applied anthropology's ability to address the behavior of state and private bureaucracies with respect to the rights and interests of nonbureaucrats.

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15:175–238), and “In the Shadow of the Smokestacks: Labor and Environmental Conflict in a Company-Dominated Town,” in Articulating Hidden Histories: Anthropology, History, and the Influence of Eric R. Wolf, edited by Jane Schneider and Rayna Rapp (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1994). The present paper was submitted in final form 31 v 94.

The aim of an anthropology of bureaucracy should be to analyze complex and unequal societies, all of which contain bureaucracies. Concrete organizations employ techniques of power for specific ends in contexts wider than the bureaucracy itself. The analysis of these techniques is not, however, simply a matter of examining explicit policy and other products of power holders, for all too often official goals mystify the real application of organized power. Techniques of power inhere in the routines of bureaucratic workers and their relationships with the persons they attempt to control. We thus face a difficult but ideally thought-provoking interplay between two levels of inquiry: directly observed bureaucratic labors—the quintessential^ organizational aspects of bureaucratized society—and the grand questions of societal constitution. The most revealing connections come from an examination of the bureaucratic production process itself; here I propose that we study bureaucratic thought-work—the routine production of thoughts about and consequent actions aimed at the control of the slippery, sometimes resistant, recipients of organizational orders.

In order to show how the concept of thought-work can be used to reveal organizational power, I here examine the United States Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) at the Mexico-United States border. The INS is engaged in probably the world’s largest effort to control human movement. It arrests over 1 million persons a year, yet paradoxically it facilitates the entry of undocumented immigrant laborers into the U.S. economy. Precisely because U.S. immigration policy is contradictory, it requires subtle guidance and coherent thought-work. I therefore focus on the most fundamental level of thought-work, INS officer worldviews—the basic, organizationally shared assumptions about relationships between self and various others. Since INS worldviews undergird the officers’ attitudes toward immigrants, they inform

us about the occurrence and avoidance of human rights abuses on the Mexico-U.S. border. Worldviews neither encompass every feature of INS thought-work nor engage all the questions relevant to explaining immigration law enforcement in advanced capitalist societies, but they do constitute a challenging and revealing topic of inquiry.

*** Toward an Anthropology of Bureaucracies

The complexity of complex societies has posed difficult though fruitful problems for cultural anthropologists and archaeologists. One response has been to widen the range of relevant processes to include global history, economy, and polity while retaining the perspective of the local setting. We might call this the local-contextual view. Bureaucracies, however, interest us precisely because they orchestrate numerous local contexts at once (Wolf 1990). Power makes context stick, and bureaucracies are the preeminent technology of power in the contemporary world. There is no better place to witness the applications and limits of power than the U.S.-Mexico border. At this boundary, for example, the media-visible INS legally distinguishes mostly Spanish-speaking undocumented immigrants from the imagined community of U.S. citizens (see Chavez 1992:16–20). It is therefore fundamental to the creation of ethnic contexts in the United States today. Anthropological attention to bureaucratic power, then, redirects the debates between introspection and the study of others toward the study of social orders that bind differentiated wholes together.[1]

Max Weber shaped the study of bureaucracies by positing a series of characteristics of an ideal rational bureaucracy—a firmly ordered hierarchy of offices, delimited jurisdictions for those offices, exclusion of irrelevant tasks and interests, and so forth (Gerth and Mills 1946:196–204). Weber's typology of rational administration is taken to stand by itself, but it should not be; it was part of his discussion of the modernization of societal power. Although he Recognized bureaucratic elements in precapitalist or non-Western societies, he used the perfection of rational bureaucracy to demonstrate the shift from indirect rule by elites, whether patrimonial or prebendal, toward capitalism and mass party polities (pp. 204–16). For example, he distinguished rule by notables, compromised by their many roles in society, from rule by disinterested bureaucrats (pp. 210-n). The point here is not

whether Weber's assertions are adequate but that he focused on internal aspects of bureaucracy within a very broad context.

Weber's typology set the stage, however, for a narrowing of the study of organizations. Becoming an issue in itself, it joined the still more restrictive managerial interest in diagnosing administrative forms in order to control them (see Fischer and Sirianni 1984). I will forgo a review of the vast sociology of bureaucracy (see Perrow 1986). I note, however, that in sociology very sophisticated and fine-grained studies of bureaucracies emerged—in a sense making the best of a bad situation—from this problematic narrowing of focus, addressing, for example, social systems within (and often resistant to) rational work structure (Gouldner 1954) or the experiential consequences of laboring in a bureaucracy (Crozier 1971, Jackall 1978). A few works, such as Perrow's (1984) study of "normal accidents" and Jack- all's (1988) study of major corporate managers' "moral rules-in-use," link the internal forms and relations of bureaucracy with societal issues of the first order. However, as Perrow (1986:5) writes, "societal scientists have, until recently, avoided the 'big' question of unregulated and unperceived power through bureaucratic organizations, even though the research that has been done points in this direction."

Anthropology has arrived late on the scene in the study of bureaucracies. The main motivation for anthropologists to study bureaucracy seems to be the microscopic or "ethnographic" encounter. The other major tradition in anthropology, the broad sweep of human history and its component social orders, seems relatively isolated from the ethnographic impulse of anthropologists to observe bureaucracies at work. The program developed by Britan and Cohen (1980:14–20), for example, inverts Weber's Eurocentric modernism, favoring anthropology's role in cross-cultural studies of bureaucracy or, within the core, in the study of the informal and interstitial. Britan and Cohen (1980:23, 26) intermittently mention power and inequality, but they never integrate them into the comparative research agenda.[2]

Schwartzman (1993) develops a stronger ethnographic approach to the interior life of organizations. Drawing on recent work in sociology and social psychology, she discards the idea that the charted organization is in some way distinct from and prior to the interactions of persons in the

organizational work process,- she argues that the interactions are the organization and emphasizes conflict, negotiation, and change. However, she goes on to define a troublesome direction of inquiry for the ethnography of bureaucracies (p. 71):

<quote>

Meetings have generally teen the background structure for examining and assessing what are assumed to be the really important matters of organizational life, for example, power, decisions, ideology, and conflict. In this book [Schwartzman 1989] these concepts become the background structures for examining the significance of specific meetings at the Center, and these meetings are used in turn to critique these standard concepts.

</quote>

Although she calls for macro-micro linkage (pp. 37, 71), she lacks a strategic conception of how to forge such connections. Ultimately (p. 45) she dismisses the frustrating macro-micro dichotomy in favor of a call for inquiry into the small cultural worlds of the powerful and the powerless. What would the end product of such a study be? Despite the quotation’s final qualifying clause, Schwartzman’s program points to a portrait of an organizational lifeway as isolated as the most isolated ethnography.

Handelman (1981) and Herzfeld (1992) write about bureaucracy in the anthropological tradition of analyzing broad orders of conceptualization rather than adopting the narrower post-Weberian focus on organizational work. Each in his way views bureaucracy as the enactment of a particular mode of thought. Handelman (1981: 6–11) considers systematic taxonomization (division of complex wholes into exclusive categories) and the ranking of taxa essential features of bureaucracy and sees this manner of thought as distinctive of the Renaissance and modern West. Herzfeld (1992:19–20) “roots” bureaucracy in a symbolic distinction he perceives as Judeo-Christian or Indo-European: persons are reduced to essential categories of insider versus outsider, and the latter are

excluded from norms of hospitality. (This exclusion accounts for bureaucratic rudeness, which Herzfeld labels “indifference.”)

Bureaucratic thought, however, emerges in a particular institutional work context. Taxonomy, hierarchy, and reduction of complexity to essences are widely shared features of human thought. The question is how they are generated in bureaucratic workers’ minds within a particular job setting—what the political and economic rationale is for having large masses of workers think in such formats about concrete topics such as rights to entry and citizenship. Although Handelman and Herzfeld qualify their stance with calls for the study of bureaucratic power in operation (see Handelman and Leyton 1978), both ultimately see bureaucratic institutions and societies as arising from a Hegelian idea playing itself out through history. I advocate asking instead how characteristic ideas are produced and reproduced in societal-historical contexts.

The attribution of bureaucratic thought to Western cultural history is likewise troublesome; Chinese religion, for example, very clearly demonstrates bureaucratic ideas (Ahern 1981) in keeping with the actual bureaucratic organization of the Chinese state. Herzfeld seeks to avoid dividing ideal-typic rational bureaucracy from the rest of symbolically negotiated life, but in so doing he reifies Western culture in a manner that Carrier (1992) has perceptively termed “Occidentalism.” The history of states clearly demonstrates that bureaucracy is often found in highly centralized economies, militaries, and polities.

I seek to synthesize bureaucratic thought and bureaucratic work in approaching bureaucracies as an object of study. However, we must not confuse the means of our study, bureaucracy as object, with the agenda for the study. There may be times when understanding one organization or set of organizations is sufficient as an objective of study in a larger research process. If we are to understand how bureaucracies help orchestrate complex and unequal societies, we must retain a sense of movement from the interior of organizations to what Perrow calls the “ ‘big’ question of unregulated and unperceived power” (also see Nader 1972, 1980), and therefore I employ a discovery framework that

begins with the unification of work and thought on the job and proceeds to an examination of a series of contexts to highlight likely power relationships.

Bureaucracies are hierarchical organizations designed to force the production of thoughts as a work duty.

Thought-work occurs under regulated and monitored circumstances,- it is distinct from the autonomous contemplation, memorization, or recitation involved in other systems of conceptual production.[3] Thought-work is required of any attempt to control the behavior of other human beings because those human beings have their own wills and motivations and their responses cannot be entirely anticipated by instructions (Lipsky 1980: 15). However, not all control relations are bureaucratic. Bureaucratic thought-work occurs when a detailed division of labor partially routinizes the "manufacture" of thoughts. In turn, this detailed division of labor occurs only when the bureaucrat encounters the controlled party in a single-stranded vertical relationship, though in practice the addition of strands is of interest. Bureaucracy, as Weber pointed out, works differently from multistranded vertical relationships between, say, regional elites and local populaces.[4] State workers, such as police, social benefits workers, or immigration inspectors, attempt to control persons outside of the organization. Other bureaucrats, for example, in production corporations or universities, attempt to control organization members who work directly at the point of production (just as teaching faculty, adjuncts, and teaching assistants do when they meet courses and produce grades).[5] Furthermore, bureaucrats are required to control other bureaucrats. Bureaucratic thought-work thus locates an inevitable struggle: bureaucratic workers must think for themselves because of the nature of their tasks, yet they must be controlled as thinkers in order to ensure the regular production of control duties.

The notion of thought-work gives a Marxian slant, then, to a Weberian theme. It emphasizes that social relationships have to be produced. It suggests that internal characteristics such as Schwartzman's negotiations or Handelman's taxa reveal much about the external relationships between controllers and the controlled. Thought-work is thus more pointed than organizational processes or organizational cultures. Bringing the concept of power to

studies of bureaucracies is and undoubtedly will continue to be more challenging than bringing the concept of culture to them.[6]

The first inquiry involves the thought process itself. The bureaucracy literature is replete with perceptive studies on, for example, the processual approach to case and rule interpretation (Handelman and Leyton 1978), the concept of organizational horizons to thought (Emerson and Paley 1992), and political learning by experience and subsequent anticipatory decision making (Gilboy 1991, 1992). These and other studies have demonstrated that thought-work is rarely the mechanical application of rules but rather consists of learning and patternfollowing conducted simultaneously at multiple levels. (I shall focus on the most comprehensive level, organizational worldviews.) The fact that bureaucratic thought proves richly contextual rather than abstractly rational turns our attention to the context itself, the organizational workplace. Furthermore, thought-work is more than purely functional, since the tools of bureaucracy are sentient persons who develop logical elaborations, rationales, and critiques rooted in job struggles. Observations on thought, then, can be used to characterize the society, polity, and economy that have produced specific “thinking situations.”

Thought-work, secondly, draws our attention to the existence and actions of thought-workers in a manner that bureaucracy as reified conceptualization does not. Lipsky (1980) delineates, for example, the layer of streetlevel bureaucrats—teachers, caseworkers, and police officers—who deal directly with the nonbureaucratic subject population (as opposed to those bureaucrats who address the control of the tier of bureaucratic producers below them). He demonstrates that the distinctive work routines and interests of street-level bureaucrats cause workplace conflicts both with managers and with nonbureaucrats. It therefore behooves us to place streetlevel bureaucrats in a distinctive sequence of power relations.

Street-level bureaucrats struggle with their managers in terms of power through the organization, yet they also share much with their managers. Many managers climb up through the ranks and share thought frameworks with the people they supervise. Manager-worker relations are inherently conflictive, but, as Lipsky (1980: 25) says, managers depend on their subordinates to implement policies in such a way as to

reward them or at least not draw negative attention; managers and workers therefore reach a tense balance of interests. I follow Schwartzman in noticing the conversation of arguments and agreements between street-level INS workers and managers represented in the INS thought framework.

Yet power inside the organization is not enough. We sense the play of power above the bureaucracies that we study. The literature on states debates who controls state agencies—specific power elites, broader coalitions in the political economy, or autonomous interests in the upper reaches of the state. This literature reflects, however, an awareness that a distinctly political layer sets major agendas for bureaucracy, in Weber's terms the instrument of power (Gerth and Mills 1946:228; Wright 1978:181—225; Foley and Yambert 1989). Thus it is less important for bureaucracy studies that we resolve this debate than that we induce from subtle, even hidden, evidence the operation of politics and the predetermination of the work done by bureaucracies by fundamental decisions, emphases, and budgets. Exploring what a bureaucracy does rather than explicit policy is a valuable way of learning about power holders, who rarely reveal their hands. Lipsky, for example, organizes his book around the idea that street-level bureaucrats frustrate overt public goals in response to work conditions such as overwhelming caseloads, shortage of resources, and the need for self-protection and protection of labormarket position (1980:22). However, as Perrow (1986: 263) writes, "we should always examine the possibility that organizational masters prefer unofficial goals over official ones and may even make sure that official goals are not achieved."

Street-level bureaucrats attempt to carry out power decisions in the face of nonbureaucratic populations. The assumption of a control bureaucracy is that the subject population is subordinate, the recipient of actions, but anthropologists have found that nonbureaucrats often take the initiative by pursuing goals that bypass official control (Skalnik 1989). Street-level bureaucrats and nonbureaucrats struggle using complex thought processes about each other. These models of opposition and relationship, unlike those deployed inside organizations, may involve radically differing assumptions about social action and legitimacy (Handelman and Leyton 1978). However partial their control and incomplete their understanding of nonbureaucrats, street-level bureaucrats retain the effective force of the state or private employer to make their thoughts into realities.

If thought-work is the core of a production process, then what is bureaucracies' product? Simply posing this question forces us to confront bureaucratic power in society. Bureaucracies operate on two levels. Street-level bureaucrats perform actual functions. Yet bureaucracy as a form projects an aura of finality, completeness, and inhuman objectivity (what Philip Abrams [1988] terms the "state idea") over empirically complex and often highly biased results.[7] Ethnography shatters the hard surface of officiality; indeed, for all the recent questioning of ethnography, I can hardly think of a method more inclined to penetrate formalism in the study of power.

The notion of thought-work is not simply a way of saying that bureaucrats do conceptual chores on behalf of explicit and official mandates (no matter how aware of interest and power we may be). Because of its mystifying qualities, societal production can be discerned only when we tack between internal work struggles and external work accomplishments, seeking the power results—the regularly recurring patterns of action and inaction—of specific bureaucracies or clusters of bureaucracies. Does the organization avoid certain issues while routinely excelling with regard to others? Can we locate this "mobilization of bias" (Schattschneider i960, cited in Lukes 1974:16) within a patterned combination of overarching political decisions, resource levels, internal organizational negotiations, and the resistances and acquiescences of subject populations? Repetitious or mutating power results are the building blocks for the ongoing construction of unequal societies; identifying them and their determinants is the central task for students of bureaucracy.

The idea of thought-work is not helpful when reified as an abstract definition of bureaucracy. It is helpful when it delineates a sequence of inquiries following from a view of bureaucracies as workplaces involved in the production of control, each inquiry being an open box awaiting historical specification. The thought-work concept is thus amenable to contextualization for bureaucracies of quite different natures, places, and times.[8] It is a framework whose test is its utility rather than its universality.

*** Bureaucratic Worldviews: Methods of Approach

A worldview is a set of fundamental assumptions about the nature of being arid comprehensible forms of action and relationship in the human and physical universe (Kearney 1984). It is pervasive rather than narrowly applicable; it guides more specific understandings. A worldview is required for thought-work. The bureaucratic control of humans involves complexity and unpredictability that translate into discretion on the part of the officer. While expert knowledge suffices for routine tasks, the variability of situations requires general guidelines. Worldview directs thought-work such as case interpretation. Therefore organizational worldview fosters the subtle coherence of decisions over a wide variety of cases.[9]

However, the intellectual processes of bureaucrats inevitably transcend the purely functional. First, as Kearney (1984) notes, worldviews strain toward logico- structural integration; people tend to think them through to completion. This may produce skepticism with regard to contradictory elements in the bureaucratic work situation, but bureaucrats affirm organizational assumptions as they launch their criticisms. Furthermore, much of what emerges during logical contemplation is in fact second-order rationalization of politically and economically ordered work routines. This results in reflective statements that, while not necessarily literal truth, do reveal the settled end point of key organizational struggles from the perspective of street-level workers. Lipsky (i98o:xiii) perceptively writes of experienced bureaucrats, “Compromises in work habits and attitudes are rationalized as reflecting workers’ greater maturity, their appreciation of practical and political realities, or their more realistic assessment of the nature of the problem. But these rationalizations only summarize the prevailing structural constraints on human service bureaucracies. They are not true in an absolute sense.” Nevertheless, the contemplative and second-order aspects of worldviews do influence action on the world; they reinforce the stance of street-level bureaucrats when facing their managers and, especially, nonbureaucratic populations.

The analysis of bureaucratic worldviews offered here has two parts: analysis of individual interviews[10] through worldview categorization and analysis of contexts of learning. In categorizing worldviews, I use Kearney’s (1984)

seven universals: self, other(s), relationship and causality (assumed direction of action, from self to other or other to self), time, space (especially the boundary area), and classification (with emphases on citizenship, nationality, and law). Rather than force artificial consistency on individual conversations, I also utilize Strauss's (1990) classification of mutually contradictory propositions in interviews.[11] The contexts for learning bureaucratic worldviews are identified in Leyton's study of the Workmen's Compensation Board (WCB) in Newfoundland (quoted by Handelman and Leyton 1978:84):

<quote>

The particular ideology which provides moral imperatives and constrains action on the part of the WCB is a distinctive blend of a rigidly codified set of regulations ..., of a recognition of the financial responsibility of the WCB to industry, of an uncoordinated melange of philosophical and political ideas garnered during the lifetime of the officials, and of the morals learned from the exchange of difficult or illustrative cases between officials. The WCB bureaucrat learns these ideological constraints in no particularly programmed fashion; rather, he brings to the WCB his personal ideas, reads the Act until its stipulations are clear to him, and then absorbs as much as he can of WCB philosophy and case histories as he moves through the organization.

</quote>

The contexts to which Leyton points can be summarized as recruitment, training (or reading), and organizational socialization. More important, he indicates that bureaucrats learn and test subtle compromises with the political economy.

*** The INS: Servant of Decisions from Above

To perceive power above the INS, we must contrast its formal missions with the real policies it implements. The INS, along with the State Department and

the Department of Labor, issues visas to new legal immigrants and nonimmigrant visitors. It inspects all persons— citizens, immigrants, and visitors—for admission at air, sea, and land ports of entry. Enforcement of the immigration laws is its responsibility. The Border Patrol, its uniformed police branch, prevents undocumented entry along the land border between ports of entry, Inspections polices the ports of entry, and several INS branches operate in the interior of the country and enforce laws such as those against hiring undocumented aliens or aliens working outside the terms of their visas. Arrestees may be deported after an administrative trial in which the INS serves as initial bond setter, jailer, and prosecutor before an immigration judge who belongs to a separate branch of the Deparment of Justice, the Executive Office of Immigration Review. Those denied admission at ports of entry or detained at sea go through an administrative hearing called "exclusion" involving yet narrower procedural rights. The assumption of the law is that deportation or exclusion will be enforced uniformly against equivalent violators whatever their nationality; since the INS has never been given the budgets or mandates to permit this, unstated policies guide actual enforcement choices.

The INS implements three tacit policies. Voluntary departure is an alternative to formal deportation, employed especially at the Mexican border, whereby arrested aliens are permitted (indeed, encouraged) to waive their rights to a deportation hearing and return to Mexico without lengthy detention, expensive bonding, and trial (see West and Moore 1989). In 1989 the INS released 87% of those apprehended, 830,556 persons, for voluntary departure. Three percent of immigration offenders were deported; the remainder entered the legal process but did not leave the country (U.S. INS 1990:111). Most enforcement is directed against Mexicans rather than other undocumented entrants. Ninety-one percent of deportable aliens apprehended by the INS in 1989 were Mexicans (U.S. INS 1990:112), although approximately 42% of undocumented aliens in the United States are non-Mexican (Woodrow and Passel 1990:48). Since these undocumented aliens are released into Mexico at the U.S. border, they can and do repeat their attempts to evade border enforcement until they finally succeed in entering (Espenshade 1990). In accordance with this policy the U.S. government at once arrests many persons, thereby reinforcing the state idea of bounded citizenship (emphasizing symbols of "border control") for media sale and consumption (see Fernandez and Pedroza 1982, Cornelius 1982), and negates the effectiveness of these arrests, thus permitting labor

migration in numbers well beyond those permitted by law (see Bustamante 1978).[12] This combination of formal and tacit policies will be called the voluntary-departure complex.

Differentiation by nationality is the second tacit policy. The principal mechanism of this is unequal asylum admissions rooted in U.S. foreign policy history (Stepick 1982, Loescher and Scanlan 1986). Pedraza-Bailey (1985) demonstrates that easy undocumented entry for Mexicans contributes to their placement in the proletariat of the U.S. West, whereas asylum admission and subsidies for Cubans have aided their upward mobility. Differentiation by nationality on the U.S.-Mexico border involves primarily Mexicans and Central Americans, the latter being discouraged from filing asylum papers by lengthy detention, pressure to depart voluntarily (thus abandoning the possibility of asylum), and, if applications are made, low success rates (Koulish 1992).

Finally, the INS has entered the heavily funded realm of narcotics law enforcement. The Border Patrol has primary responsibility for the interdiction of land border smuggling between ports of entry; at such ports, Customs has primary responsibility, but INS inspectors are cross-designated as Customs officers. INS Investigations is deeply involved in inter-federal-agency operations involving narcotics. The INS actively seeks and deports permanent-resident and undocumented-alien felons finishing jail sentences (Kesselbrenner and Rosenberg 1991).

*** Questions for the INS Worldview

It is not difficult to demonstrate the role of regional and sectoral economic interests in the creation of a permissive policy toward Mexican labor (Portes and Walton 1981:53–58). The idea of thought-work permits us to probe how this policy is implemented in the face of ostensibly contrary purposes.[13] INS budgets benefit from low-cost, ineffectual but politically visible arrests of Mexicans near the border. INS managers therefore need to implement this strategy despite the fact that their subordinates believe in enforcing the immigration law effectively, which means going after higher-cost offenders such as alien smugglers. The result of this struggle within the ranks of the

INS is, as we shall see, the production of the voluntary-departure complex on a daily basis. A coherent worldview renders de facto policy controllable and predictable; its tenets can be taught to cohorts of new officers without overtly contradicting official statements.

In this process, of course, INS officers interact with an undocumented immigrant population that deliberately tries to avoid and defy state authority. Recently, narcotics law enforcement has increased the firepower available to INS officers and altered the calculation of risks. How do INS officers deal with defiance and frustration in terms of their worldviews' assumptions about the nature of social action and the characteristics of immigrants as others? What do INS worldviews tell us about abusive and abuse-avoiding behaviors (American Friends Service Committee 1990, 1992; Americas Watch 1992, 1993; Petition to the Inter-American Commission 1992)?[14]

*** INS Worldviews

**** Organizational Socialization

Most INS officers and all officers who begin careers in the Border Patrol undergo rigorous training at the federal law enforcement training camp in Glynco, Georgia. The course, in addition to physical training, consists of rote learning of Spanish and innumerable provisions of immigration and naturalization (citizenship) law. Rote memorization makes INS training ideal for inculcating worldview messages. This training routine took shape during a formative period in the political economy of the INS. In the late 1940s and early 1950s, major employers of undocumented Mexican immigrants intervened in detail in INS operations and repeatedly attacked the agency in Congress. The INS became demoralized and was almost destroyed. In 1954 a new director, General Joseph Swing, forged a subtle political compromise that eliminated direct intervention in the INS by employers and rebuilt the organization around a dominant Border Patrol at the Mexican boundary (Calavita 1992). Border Patrol training and careers became central to the INS. The compromise forged by Swing disappeared with the end of the bracero (contract labor) program in 1965, when the recent period of Mexican-border undocumented entry took shape, but the organizational

patterns of the Swing era—the boundary focus, the voluntary-departure complex, attention to the work behavior of Mexicans—serve the INS in the current political climate. The messages in INS training thus do not stand alone, a peculiar organizational tradition,- rather, they represent a vital link between the organization as it unfolds and critical moments in the political economy.

INS training produces specialization in Spanishspeaking immigrants. Neophyte Border Patrol officers know that failing Spanish will end their careers.[15] Three editions of the Spanish textbook, spanning 45 years (U.S. INS 1943, 1972, 1988), are impressively similar in content; the 1972 and 1988 editions are identical. The latest edition, under which most of the officers I interviewed were trained, refers to Mexicans or locations on the Mexican border 53 times and to non-Mexicans 4 times. (The latter are tellingly referred to, in INS jargon, as “OTMs,” other-than-Mexicans.) Mexicans are understood to be laborers; immigrants are mentioned in the context of low-wage jobs 55 times. An alternative reading that might emphasize drugs, guns, knives, and criminal activities occurs less frequently, 18 times, mostly in isolation rather than in descriptions of actions by Mexicans. The book does mention the crime of alien smuggling 24 times, for obvious reasons. Thirty-four sentences, including a series of major dialogues and translation paragraphs at the end of the text, express disapproval for defiant behavior by immigrants (“Why do you always lie?” [U.S. INS 1988:35]) or describe humility, remorse, and desire to seek entry through proper channels. The Spanish textbook prepares the INS officers to think about a one-dimensional other: a Mexican, in most cases seeking work, who in one sense is engaged in a covert activity, crossing the border, lying, possibly being smuggled but in another sense can be persuaded to be humble, truthful, and above all passive. I do not argue that this is in fact the only type of other embodied in the INS worldview; by delineating one type of proper Mexican behavior, the Border Patrol’s Spanish text allows precisely for the creation, among INS workers themselves, of an inverted and negative image, an other made of equal parts of defiance and nonhumble work (e.g., drug smuggling). If the former is expected, the latter is to be censured, with important implications for human rights in everyday INS work.

The other major hurdle for prospective INS officers is the memorization of long charts detailing who is and who is not a U.S. citizen and other minutiae

of immigration and naturalization law.[16] This knowledge is intermittently used by inspectors and may be drawn on occasionally by Border Patrol officers. However, memorizing it affects neophyte INS officers long after they have forgotten, for example, the citizenship of persons born in Puerto Rico in 1890 or in Guam in 1890 to Spanish- peninsular parents (U.S. INS n.d., lesson 2.3:7). The panoply of ways of obtaining residential rights in the United States reinforces an inchoate set of ideas in the minds of INS officers about the U.S. polity of which they themselves must be citizens. Modern citizenship delineates a set of individuals, each in a person-to-state relationship that conveys inalienable political, property, and legal rights. Furthermore, citizenship has proven an important arena of struggle within capitalism, counterposing shared rights to resources redistributed by government and corporation to the impersonality and inequity of the market (Barbalet 1988). Since INS officers are already rooted in social and cultural contexts that assume the history of U.S. citizenship rights, constitutional and redistributive, they can see in the elaborate opportunities to become a legal U.S. resident and then a citizen a way to reject, or set aside as "others," persons who enter the United States with no right to be part of the charmed circle. An INS officer told me that the legalization of formerly undocumented U.S. residents mandated in the 1986 Immigration Reform and Control Act offended him because "there are so many ways to become a citizen." INS trainees also memorize lengthy lists of exclusion categories that moralize legal judgments (one can be excluded for certain types of moral turpitude without being convicted of a felony or even of a crime). INS training is usually the employee's first and only encounter with the systematization of capitalist and constitutional justice. It crystallizes more loosely formed understandings about the even-handed, written-rule-based, and citizenright-focused nature of their job. This both sets INS officers apart from the human complexities and needs of the noncitizens with whom they deal and causes them endless frustration and introspection as they contemplate the fact that the United States, through its voluntary-departure complex, tolerates undocumented workers.

**** Managers

District directors are powerful figures in the INS, possessed of considerable legal discretion and in charge of all INS operations except the Border Patrol for areas often encompassing several states. A director to whom I spoke

identified implicitly with the INS by reciting career accomplishments and identified “others” in ways that corresponded to the position’s responsibilities. Whereas specific persons were singled out in connection with the networks of regional American politics, aliens appeared as an anonymous liquid flow that constantly threatened to seep through holes in INS dikes and pour into the interior of the United States:

<quote>

I take immigrants both seriously and skeptically. I am aware of some entrants who lie, who would do most anything to get into the U.S., but the overall big picture is that the U.S. is a country that a lot of people in the world want to be in. The global lines of it keep getting reinforced. I read newspapers differently than most people—we all do, all of us in the Service—if there’s a flood or famine, a coup, it affects us, and moving up the ladder it just gets more so.

</quote>

This perspective has a functional basis in the realities facing an INS executive. The INS risks being overwhelmed with persons—running out of detention space, exceeding budgets. Therefore INS decision makers opt to treat immigrants with potential rights as logistical problems, to be discouraged from legal options or quickly returned.[17] In an ironic inversion, undocumented entrants who can be processed quickly become a valuable resource.

The Border Patrol operates separately within the INS; the chief patrol agent is roughly equivalent to a district director, while patrol agents in charge (PAICs) of stations supervise daily operations. One PAIC frames self and other in terms of the metaphor of “war”:

<quote>

Military tactics says that you want the high ground, you want to be able to observe, to work downhill— truthfully it's a military type of setting. We are being invaded, and the army that's coming has thousands of personnel. It's a nonviolent invasion, and the tactics to interdict it have to be a nonviolent response—it's much easier to shoot than to catch a runner, arrest, and deliver him at the end.

</quote>

The "warfare" or invasion metaphor was used deliberately with me as interlocutor[18] to justify in the face of subordinate and lateral criticism this PAIC's policy of pressuring street-level officers to increase arrests in order to generate increased funding. The PAIC intermittently contemplated the futility of catching and releasing hundreds of thousands of undocumented entrants. He mentioned alternative possibilities ("Nationally, I have to rely on creating employment in a foreign country") but retreated from such thoughts, using a spatial metaphor to contain them ("My world is very small—to convince the chief patrol agent that I need resources here—and I do that with arrest statistics"). Street-level officers divide alien others into docile job seekers and "bad guys"—smugglers, guides, drivers, and others. This PAIC promoted the arrest of simple "entrants without inspection," whose processing takes minutes; he explicitly places less emphasis on smuggling arrests. The bad guys cost organizational time, up to three officer-hours each for the preparation of criminal charges. I shall argue that the tacit struggle of preferences ends in a compromise in which street-level officers furnish mass production of quiet arrests while informally punishing persons they perceive as bad guys or defiant arrestees.

The military-minded PAIC (who was himself not a veteran) should not be taken as representative. Another PAIC who operated under the same sector priorities noted that undocumented entrants moved and changed tactics before the Border Patrol shifted agents to plug "flows." According to him, it was the immigrants who were "proactive"—governmental jargon used here with great subtlety to express skepticism, since one is supposed to be "proactive," creative, decisive. His INS self was passive while the other was

active, the inverse of the U.S. worldview. He described the task of his agents as maintaining a steady number of apprehensions with the realistic assumption that it would not always be possible to initiate or control the situation. Thus, he discussed the managerial need to prevent or contain embarrassing incidents of abuse, an issue hardly raised by his more aggressive counterpart. Yet this more relaxed attitude was deeply painful for the PAIC himself. He expressed this by besieging his self (“The public perception of the Border Patrol is that we are all bad; no one comments on the compassionate acts”) and by distancing the American public as an other through ideological schemas of Mexican immigration (“The American public is very gullible, uninformed, unconcerned; I would like them to be concerned with the high influx of illegal immigrants”).

Managers develop complex worldviews from their ascent through the ranks, their increasing command of political metaphors (undocumented aliens as invaders), and their recognition of work situations that present specific pitfalls. They try to sell metaphors upward as rationales for resource requests and downward as justifications for orders, engaging both the complex U.S. polity and their own subordinates, who, working nightly on highways or near the boundary fence, retain substantial autonomy.

**** Border Patrol Agents

Aggression and reaction frame the impossible task of Border Patrol agents. Here I examine two young men thrust onto the 20-mile boundary south of San Diego, where nearly half of all immigration arrests are made and where the potential for frustration and conflict is greatest. Rick Miller,[19] 29, is an Anglo American and grew up in metropolitan Phoenix. He distances immigrants as others with impersonal terms, for example, “they.” When asked to free-associate on “Mexico,” he replied, “Tonks—that’s our version of a Mexican,- it’s a derogatory word for an alien.” “Tonk” in Border Patrol slang derives from the sound of a flashlight hitting a person’s head.

In spite of his ability to belittle the other, Miller’s sense of accomplishment is severely wounded by the voluntary-departure complex. Asked to free-associate on “accomplishments,” he responds, “I have hampered smuggling

in this area; I have not deterred the aliens from crossing here. I have not deterred the smuggling, just hampered it."[20] Asked about "frustrations," he says, "The feeling that our accomplishments are so small that it is not effective. If the service and country provided a means to put an end to this I would feel more accomplishment in my job." Miller follows immediately with a key Border Patrol concept, "fun," that compensates for the palpable futility of the job:

<quote>

So what we have to go on is fun. I enjoy my job, I have fun—since it is a game of tag and catch—I see if I can catch more than anybody else, or how I catch them ... come up on a group on a trail, scare them half to death, that's fun and satisfaction. Seizing a smuggler's car—$5,000, $2,000 car—and you take it away from him.... Different aspects of the job become a game to entertain you while you perform the duty.

</quote>

To Miller, undocumented aliens, rather than being fully motivated human beings, vary on one dimension only: they are either docile (running is docile behavior) or defiant. The assumption is that entrants understand that the interaction between agent and alien is governed by the voluntary-departure complex (which is often true but which does not allow for disorientation on the part of aliens). Miller calls this the "game":

<quote>

If they run, they're illegal ... they know the game, they're docile if caught. They're delayed eight hours and then they do it over again. That's all we basically do, delay them. Aliens who aren't docile when they're caught—well, I'm 6–4 and 250 pounds, I take charge. My methods might be too harsh, but I use the force and means necessary to control people. If we establish force firsthand, we're not going to have problems. It's the more docile agents who

get assaulted. I do push people to the ground, tackle them, yell at them as I demand them to do what I want them to do like sit down, put their hands on their heads.

</quote>

Seeking fun amidst frustrating work may, for some individuals, provide the premises for excessive force and abusive language. The thought-work involved in Border Patrol line watch on the international boundary is relatively simple (street, highway, or workplace questioning may involve greater complexities of citizenship and residential status). People who run are very likely to be undocumented; the more passive ones “understand the game.” Those who physically resist, throw rocks, run after being caught, etc., are treated not only as potentially weapon-bearing threats—which, realistically, they may be—but also as possible members of a very different category of undocumented alien, variously called “bad boys,” “dirt-bags,” “scum-bags,” etc. Border Patrol officers assume that they resist because they have something to hide; they may be previously deported felons or face prosecution as smugglers or guides. This is selective realism on the part of INS agents—the criminal alien deportation program has indeed created a new return cycle from Mexico and Central America—but overlooks the fact that aliens may act from fear or confusion or may be defending their own standards of justice and worldviews of control over the border.[21]

Thrown rocks are one physically threatening act of defiance that scares and angers Border Patrol agents. Andrew Wells evidences the response often glossed in the INS as “common sense.” Wells, who entered the Border Patrol in 1986, is an Anglo American from a small town in southern New Mexico—an origin to which one might impute potential anti-Mexican prejudice. Yet he manifests empathy for the alien as human other: “I hope they don’t go out on the freeway,- that makes me madder than anything, especially if they have little children, because what they are doing isn’t worth risking their lives for.” He premises his brief sympathy for undocumented immigrants on the futility of the voluntary-departure complex. Asked “What is frustrating?” he answers,

<quote>

First, it’s the same ones over and over again,- second, you don’t get [i.e., you miss] lots of people; and you try the best you can, but it’s not good enough really. You reach a point where you say, “I’ll catch what I can, and I’ll let the rest go by.” You try to tell this to the new guys,- at first they’re fired up, they try to get every alien in sight, and it’s just not possible to do that.

</quote>

Wells repeats the relaxation reminder even in connection with circumstances in which he was harmed by an aggressive other: “I’ve got a scar on the forehead from a rock. It makes me pretty angry, especially when they’re thrown from the south side of the fence, because there is not a thing you can do except get out of there.” Wells’s “commonsense” stance is particularly important because he is a firearms instructor, which involves shoot/ don’t-shoot scenarios.

Relaxation, though ultimately a healthy response, fundamentally discourages Wells, since the passive self is untenable in the U.S. worldview. He finds occasional solace in activity in areas inside the border fence where immigrants stage before they run north, viewing this liminal terrain (Chavez 1992:46) as an open field for a contest for spatial control: “We push them back to the fence because it shows we still have control, plus it gives us a little breather because we can retreat back north and it takes a little while for them to filter back up.” In the absence of real communication, attacking space normally accorded to immigrants also transmits INS standards of behavior: “Usually we get frustrated or we get rocked somewhere so we decide to go in and retake their area.” Yet, fundamentally, Wells alienates himself spatially from U.S. society, speaking from “down here” close to the struggle with the immigrants rather than identifying the self with the bounded space of the U.S. state (as in Kearney 1991): “The INS is a paper tiger which doesn’t have public and congressional support; from the way I see it down here, no one cares.”

Border Patrol worldviews are second-order rationalizations of duties within the voluntary-departure complex. Recruits begin with the civilian U.S. idea of policing, reinforced by their detailed paper training in immigration and nationality law, as active arrest of all violators of objective rules. They soon learn that undocumented entrants initiate the entry and determine the flow of events and, furthermore, that management and polity favor meaningless voluntary departure over punishment. The rationalizations have three consequences. First, they undergird both abusive and abuse-avoiding behaviors. The critical acceptance of voluntary departure rationalizes relaxation in the face of alien defiance of the law. It is a mechanism for coping, inevitably insufficiently (in view of the responses of a variety of individual personalities), with what I surmise is severe stress, a passive excitement in which neither active initiation (fight) nor flight is possible.[22] However, the Border Patrol worldview also rationalizes informal punishment of defiant and morally reprehensible persons when work routines do not permit time to process them for formal legal charges. Secondly, an organization in which many officers admirably adhere to abuse-avoiding routines tolerates abusive officers for lengthy periods of time. Finally, Border Patrol officers rationalize work mandates that favor easy arrest and rapid processing by categorizing many Mexican others as docile work or family seekers. Undocumented labor-force renewal through cyclical migration is facilitated (though not demonstrably caused) by this choice and smuggling only weakly impeded.

**** Inspectors

INS inspectors admit or deny admission to persons at international ports of entry such as the crossing points linking U.S. and Mexican border cities. They must command a wide variety of legal and regulatory knowledge, and they make fine judgments about the truthfulness and applicability of verbal and documentary claims made by persons seeking admission. Yet they make these judgments under extreme time pressure and appalling work conditions;[23] at one major border port I observed, inspectors work in billowing automobile exhaust four hours per shift on the “primary” (front) line, posing questions to irascible strangers while under managerial pressure to clear cars through at an average rate of 45 seconds per inspection. Inspections thought-work is thus rich in patterned expertise, routines, and rules of thumb (see Gilboy 1991). These conditions give rise not only to

taxonomies at a lower level, however, but also to overarching ideas about the inspecting self and the inspected others.

The Inspections worldview adapts to the spatial and legal peculiarities of ports of entry. First and foremost, INS inspectors at ports of entry represent the sovereignty of the U.S. state,- they hold significantly unchecked rights to detain, search, and interrogate all persons, citizens or not, who must surrender themselves for inspection before they acquire permission to enter the country—and more complete rights there (Hull 1985:53–54). In primary inspection, the inspector invades, with quick, probing looks and questions, the space of pedestrians or motorists and quickly classifies them by behavior and responses. Secondary inspection requires interrogation, a carefully aggressive process of mentally controlling the entrant, who is already under physical control, in order to determine admissibility. One might surmise that the power of inspectors is completely unchecked, but this is not the case.

International ports of entry are sensitive political environments. The conduct of inspections of Mexican citizens and the flow of persons across the international boundary inevitably involve relations between the two nation-states, represented by U.S. port directors and Mexican consuls. Furthermore, U.S. local politics over issues such as the speed of traffic flow and the loss of access to undocumented domestics blunt the INS's ability to tighten entry control (Gilboy 1992:301–3). Gilboy has demonstrated how subtle political considerations penetrate INS operations through the thought-work involved in learning to anticipate and avoid politically sensitive denials of admission. Conversely, I observed that port inspectors are criticized for insufficient aggression if they admit a person who is later arrested by police or other INS officers. This particularly worries INS officers on the Mexican border, where they double as antinarcotics customs inspectors.

The contradictory realities of border ports of entry are played out between INS managers and inspectors. Managers (port directors and supervisory inspectors) demand simultaneous aggression and political tact from frontline employees through formulaic statements about proper deportment; inspectors interpret this organizational doctrine within their own life experiences. Inspections is one of the two points of career entry in the INS, the other being the Border Patrol. In contrast to the Border Patrol, Inspections

recruits and assigns locally. The majority of officers are Latinos (of Mexican ancestry) from border communities.[24] They inspect a population that is largely of Mexican origin. They therefore distinguish self from others within a complex sphere of loyalties, legal prerogatives, and the contradictory dialogues of politically sensitive work.

Francisco Encinas, a supervisory inspector, grew up in a cross-border family. He lived in Mexico but had U.S. citizenship and attended school on that side. He phrases his expectations of subordinates as follows:

<quote>

A good inspector goes with the flow of fraud and legitimate cases. The problem inspector manifests authority in a hard voice (“lAdonde vast” [Where are you going?]) in the tu [informal pronoun] form, gruff, with no greeting. A good inspector is able to show authority in relaxed, cool voice. In Latin culture, authority is strongest if it is calm, cool, very courteous, and formal.

</quote>

Encinas represents the tension between aggression and tact through a claim about generalized Latino culture. He essentializes his own highly distinctive cross-border experience in order to mandate a certain pattern of behavior for the inspectors he supervises.

For all that Encinas partakes of border interchange, characteristically for the INS he remains capable of distancing himself from law-defying others. Using a Mexican metaphor, he envisions himself saying to a documentary violator, “This is the doorway to our house. Would you let me in the doorway to your house when you catch me in a lie?” Furthermore, as he moves from the local to the political economy, more fixed ideological schemas emerge that force a contrast between neglected law enforcer and too-liberal American immigration policy. Encinas complains, as so many INS officers do, that the

1986 Immigration Reform and Control Act legalized “lawbreakers” (persons in the United States without legal status continuously since January 1, 1982, among others).

Maria Alicia Carbajal defines herself by pride in interrogation. Carbajal was born in the United States and is thus a U.S. citizen, but she grew up in Tijuana, Mexico, returning to the United States at the age of 15. After 2 years of college and 15 years as a health care worker, Carbajal went to work as an inspector in 1989. She defines her self through her skill in “breaking” lies in secondary inspection: “They call me to break. I love fraud.... I really like my job—the line gets tiring, and the fumes—but I love fraud. We have a sixth sense,- you can tell they’re lying.... I am in this position because I speak perfect Spanish, so it’s easy to tell they’re lying; inspectors without Spanish miss things.” This definition of self is premised on a reductive view of the other as “fraud” (“they” are “lying”). Yet Carbajal’s responses are not entirely consistent: when asked to free-associate about “aliens” she said “smuggling” (an enforcement response), yet for “Mexico” she said “resident aliens, border crossers” (two legal ways of entering the United States).

Carbajal vertically contained (in Strauss’s terms) the complexity of her work experiences when asked about her accomplishments: “I am proud—too bad we can’t do more things about lane 25 [inspector slang for the illegal entries visible to the sides of the port]—but I am proud of stopping illegal aliens on my lane, of stopping smuggling drugs. I take care of my country, do something to help my country.” This is an extraordinary response. Carbajal has lived the immigrant experience,- her schema uses the struggle for state control over the border to grasp her U.S. self. In so doing, she subordinates the schema of uncontrolled undocumented entry to prevent it from frustrating her as it does so many other INS agents.

Mary Carrasco has lived her whole life in a U.S. border city,- her parents and, indeed, grandparents were U.S. citizens of Mexican ancestry. She completed two years of college and then worked in various “pink-collar” jobs to support her children before joining inspections in 1989. Her concept of active relationship and categorization of entrants resembles Carbajal’s, which suggests that they are rooted in the immediate job situation:

<quote>

No, I’m not critical; our attitudes get tarnished because every day we encounter lies and fraud. One thing that stays in my mind is that my supervisor said that 93 percent of people coming through are innocent, so I keep in mind that everybody is innocent till they demonstrate some stress,- then I attack.

</quote>

I asked Carrasco, as I did the other Latino interviewees,[25] for her thoughts on working for the INS:

<quote>

Growing up here as a little girl, you see these as really glorified jobs.... I’m doing what I always wanted to do. The hometown people are very proud that I achieved such a good goal, a government job here in [name of city]. The negative is from the people in Mexico. When I do an apprehension, when I do a case, I’m asked to look the other way, asked to be more compassionate because I’m a Hispanic. My best defense is “Look, I have a job; my family, my children need a place to eat.”

</quote>

Carrasco identifies her self with her job, both as a defense against criticism and as a positive form of accomplishment. In fact, she draws an explicit equivalence of Mexicans and herself as workers when she defines the other. Asked to free-associate on “aliens,” she responded, “Most of them are pretty respectful. I feel for them, their need because of their country’s economy. Society teaches them to lie to go work at age twelve. I have a lot of

compassion for Mexican people,- if the situation was reversed I would do it." Carrasco is, in fact, farther removed from Mexican national identity than Carbajal, and she needs less to insist on a U.S. selfidentity, but her knowledge of Mexicans, while sympathetic, is also reductive. When INS officers express sympathy for undocumented immigrants because of their economic situation and assert that arresting such persons is nevertheless part of their job, they arrive at a one-dimensional expectation for their counterparts' behavior: that the sincere entrant ought to go along with the arrest routine in exchange for the most favorable available treatment under the law, a rapid voluntary return or (at ports or entry) a turnaround without one of the variety of fraudulent-entry charges. We might call this the creation of the "indifference" to which Herzfeld has pointed.

Herzfeld suggests that differentiation is manifest most fundamentally at national boundaries ("all other bureaucratic classifications are ultimately calibrated to the state's ability to distinguish between insiders and outsiders" [1992:109; also see 36–37]). The inspectors we have listened to here do, in fact, extract their own sense of self as citizens, as insiders, out of another potential self as border Latino/a and in so doing reduce the complexity of the outsiders. They complete this conceptual work, every 45 seconds or so, as part of a production process designed to elicit citizen/outsider distinctions, and they do so under a set of difficult-to-follow, even contradictory supervisory mandates that amount to a call for tactful indifference. In one reading of Herzfeld's Social Production of Indifference (1992), then, indifference is produced in the bureaucratic workplace as opposed to being its essence or root.

**** Contemplating the Others

Thus far I have concentrated on the functional aspects of thought-work. Here I consider the logical elaborations developed by INS officers out of their work experiences, beginning with their ideas about immigrants. Dehumanization is a key part of public discourse about undocumented immigrants in the United States (Cornelius 1982, Chavez 1992), and dehumanization would indeed greatly concern us were it manifested by the INS officers who directly encounter them. Do INS officers in fact dehumanize immigrants?

Lucille Hanks grew up in the Midwest, and before she moved to Orange County, California, she had not previously thought about the border. Looking for a job, she took the Border Patrol exam in 1977. Eventually, she became the Border Patrol's first woman supervisor. Hanks is justly proud of overcoming the initial skepticism of male agents,- in the process, she identified herself with the Border Patrol "green."[26] She was stationed in the high-volume corridor south of San Diego, and her ideas developed out of the shock of this experience. Asked to free-associate on "aliens," she said. "Oh my! I see nights in San Diego, humongous groups of people, down in a canyon,- we bring in a helicopter, light up the brush, and there's fifty people in the brush." Hanks's working concepts are typical for the Border Patrol: the dichotomy of docile and dangerous entrants, the emphasis on "common sense." But as she moves from context to ideology she expresses a more rigid and frightened view, a vertical segmentation of control (nation) versus uncontrollable (masses) over an alternative schema of common humanity:

<quote>

The American public needs to know the severity of the illegal immigration problem. Even though we need to remain humane and enlightened, still we have the nation's best interest to consider, and unlimited, uncontrolled immigration is not in the nation's best interest. We need to work with other countries where there are massive amounts of people to keep them in their own areas because the U.S. cannot swallow every single economic and political refugee in the world.

</quote>

Hanks praised the "courage" of California Governor Pete Wilson in declaring immigration a drain on California's economy and then compared the United States to declining Rome allowing the barbarian hordes to enter its gates.

Hanks, however, expresses only one extreme of INS contemplation of the other. Sarah McConnell is equally unusual for her speculations about immigrants as people with complex motivations and experiences. McConnell works as a deportation officer. Deportation is divided into custody cases (those held in INS facilities, such as those for the current glut of criminal aliens), more or less quickly processed and deported, and noncustody cases, in which persons are released on bond or their own recognizance. Deportation work, ironically, provides opportunities to learn immigrant stories, especially in noncustody cases, because the officer rules on requests such as work authorization or stay of deporta- ; tion that reflect the conditions and needs of immigrants and their families during the extended periods of time required for legal affairs to be settled. McConnell goes far beyond the limited interpretive concepts needed for her job:

<quote>

I think only a small proportion of non-English- speaking immigrants even understand the whys of the INS system. A group of Central Americans is caught by the Border Patrol ... but is considered to have a plight and released on “own recognizance” [no money bond] by the immigration judge. We explain that deportation proceedings are pending, but I think that many of them interpret that as a decision by the government that they are allowed to stay. After a while, they become aware that they are still under deportation proceedings. Some really suffer,- it’s hard to get a job here, especially if they have no network of friends or relatives. After years of hard knocks, employers who pay little because they have no documents, they do not ever give in to the U.S., but they do see that the U.S. is not what they thought it was. The only ones who make it are the ones with a strong network, but the ones who come here to dream of the U.S. as a solution to poverty fall into a deep depression. They often do not like U.S. society, because they leave a society with very fine and strong support, a community, neighbors. A great many become illegal commuter aliens, work here for periods, maybe long periods. This happens for an enormous number of people, mainly South and Central Americans and Mexicans, because it is hard to commute from Poland, Thailand—they are forced to remain here.

</quote>

This extraordinary statement not only situates McConnell’s self in relationship to the immigrants and seeks a perspective on them as full humans but also indicates a penetrating understanding of the voluntary-departure complex and its role in creating the transnational flow of peoples across the southern border.

If McConnell, to an extent, identifies with the immigrants, she also criticizes the INS in a way that makes it an other: “These people in government constantly talked in form numbers,- they spoke about the people who came to us as the holders of this or of that.” Free- associating on “INS,” she said “bad guys, hard-nosed, unreasonable, law-enforcement-minded to the maximum, lacking in sensitivity—but serving a public need.” The latter reminds us that McConnell has to comprehend her own job. She finds some moral satisfaction in expelling criminal aliens, although even here her unusual honesty about the ineffectiveness of immigration policy leads her to note the “continuous revolving door of Mexican, El Salvadoran criminals”,- she reports of her noncriminal work, “I’ve helped a few people immigrate someone they loved; as an INS officer I cannot precisely tell them what to do, but I can guide them where to find out.”

These two interviews may seem to cover the hostile and the empathetic way of understanding aliens, but this dichotomy does not do justice to INS thought. Antonio Morales grew up in a small Western city,- his father, an immigrant from Mexico, was a seed-mill operator, one of the better-paid and more stable jobs in agriculture.

After taking up his father’s occupation, Morales switched to the Border Patrol for better pay and benefits. He reveals his ideal of proper social relations when he describes his approach to his immigrant father while contemplating this job change:

<quote>

When I first applied, someone asked me how I would feel if the Border Patrol went up to me. So I thought that I never asked my father, and I made a point of asking him. He said, “No problem, if that’s what you’re going to do”; his big concern was that I would receive an injury, but he realized that it was a job that had to be done. So I said to my dad that I was glad that he said that, because I had never thought about it.

</quote>

Morales, deeply rooted in Mexican family understandings, shows deference toward his father, and similarly he expects respect for his own authority. The behavior of immigrants deeply puzzles him:

<quote>

Aliens in a general manner are losing respect, not placing much importance in the law anymore. On a mesa with a lot of aliens waiting, two or three are spotting. Before, if we made an attempt, they would scatter. Now we get hit with rocks. They toy with you, don’t flee, make you walk right up to the fence, and then they step back.... That can be frustrating; common courtesy is missing. If we run into aliens that are real rough, they will cuss, but the Border Patrol keeps drilling into our head that you’ve got to set yourself above them. You can have some real trying times with them people.

</quote>

<quote>

Way down south [Mexicans from the interior] is real different from the border [local Mexicans]. Along the border, I always address them with respect; if they don’t reply with respect, you can cut out with the Usted

[formal pronoun] and talk firmly. Guys from the interior offer more respect than the border. A 12-year-old at the port of entry is streetwise; you have to treat him as a child but he behaves very coy, testing, using bad words. People in their 60s I treat with the utmost respect, because there is nothing else to gain otherwise. A lady in her 40s, 5 os, on the highway—well, you wouldn't think it, but her trunk is full of narcotics. Before she didn't fit the profile, but now I don't know what I'm going to encounter.

</quote>

Morales, by categorizing these various others, tries to decide both how to act toward different persons and how to understand who these people with whom he has a brief police encounter are. He uses his own upbringing to create these categories. In addition, he shares with other INS officers the idea of abstract law and order from U.S. civic culture as well as the good-guys/bad-guys view of border crossers, which helps reconcile law enforcement duties with an alternative U.S. idea that immigrants are hard workers and that even undocumented ones may be law-abiding. The modal INS vision of immigrants is limited, but it is rarely dehumanizing. Problems arise, however, as the volume and complexity of immigration increases and as Mexican border communities urbanize. The other then no longer fits a narrow mold. The decay of a predictable worldview for INS officers leads to a jumpy and incomprehensible border environment made worse by the overlap of undocumented immigration and the "war on drugs," in which both sides are armed with automatic weapons. Antonio Morales reminds himself to maintain his authority and selfrestraint throughout.

**** Contemplating the Political Economy

U.S. politics can play the role of other to INS officers as much as the immigrants do. Most INS officers have opinions about U.S. immigration policy; we have seen the range of these opinions, observing a general tendency toward acceptance of legal entry and restriction of undocumented entry. However, having an opinion about immigration is different from contemplating the political economy. The three speakers who follow are all senior officers occupying administrative positions,- their career experiences

seem to have induced them to probe more deeply into immigration and U.S. society.

Tom Dukes started in the Border Patrol before the end of the bracero program in 1965. He uses the “game” construct to develop a portrait of the past:

<quote>

One night I had a heck of a chase on the sand dunes of [area name]. God damn, they pay us to do this?—I’d do it for free. That was what it was like back then [sighs nostalgically]. Chasing people is fun, it’s the greatest game in the world, and the nice part of the Border Patrol was generally speaking we didn’t have to kill anybody, didn’t hurt anybody. They came to our section of the line, we threw down the gauntlet, and either they won or we won. Most were voluntarily returned to Mexico, and the next night the games could begin again. But it worked.

</quote>

INS and especially Border Patrol officers often use the “past versus present” construct to encompass the changes and frustrations they face. But Dukes does more than this; he follows immediately with a historical explanation for the change in border control:

<quote>

The INS made a big mistake in not doubling or tripling manpower when the bracero program ended. A nucleus of people [immigrants] with experience in the U.S. brought their friends, their older sons. It happened gradually,- it was a snowballing process. Up to 1970, maybe even ’72, the INS could have controlled the border,- it wouldn’t have exploded to what we have in the late

1970s, the ‘80s. By ’72 we had lost the game,- you couldn’t stop it, not with a practical amount of people anyhow.

</quote>

This is a very accurate assessment of the chronology of Mexican border immigration after the cessation of the bracero program, although it attributes too much autonomy to the INS’s decisions and not enough to the constraints that influenced its choices (see Calavita 1992: 141–66).

Dukes extends his historical argument to the border of today. First he notes, with some accuracy (though the INS would deny this), that the Border Patrol is now preoccupied with antidrug enforcement:

<quote>

I’ve developed some good people, put some good work ethics in them—but they face the same problems. Nobody cares about immigration, and the dope flows through. Aliens and narcotics have to be worked in different manners,- in fact, the aliens just get in our way. If we could just get lots of narcotics, because the individual narcotics loads are about where the alien loads were in the 1960s, 1970s—fast climbing.

</quote>

Dukes makes the argument that the historical pattern of border drug smuggling resembles that of border undocumented immigration and that past failures might be repeated; certainly one could dispute any number of elements in this analogy, but for our purposes here it depicts one man’s effort to comprehend the historical nature of border control by states.

Pete Krzywicki has spent a similar period of time on the Mexican border in the Border Patrol, and he uses a very similar depiction of the past to situate his dilemmas in the present. He questions the idea of “control” more than Dukes, however, probing deeper into its symbolic content:

<quote>

If the Congress of the U.S. and the leadership of this country were serious about the integrity of our borders, they would show a commitment, and they haven’t yet.... An officer in this sector says, “We are maintaining a level of control.” At times I get pumped up, say, “Let’s catch those bastards, guides, smugglers.” For years I refused to admit I was a pawn in a political game, but I am.

The gemstone of IRCA [Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986] was supposed to be employer sanctions. We’re running around making a token effort, but I’m not convinced. It’s a bunch of b.s.—it appears to Congress that they [employers] will be punished for hiring illegal aliens, but we are averaging 1,100 apprehensions a day [in this sector],- they didn’t come here to vacation. We are such a minuscule force to enforce employer sanctions,- this is a big country, and a minuscule workforce is devoted by the INS.

</quote>

Krzywicki’s analysis is entirely consistent with Cala- vita’s (1982, 1990) view that employer sanctions are symbolic rather than real law enforcement.

However, Krzywicki is unspecific about the politics that produce this result; his worldview assumes an abstract other at the level of those who really control the United States. Ronald Wilson, a 20-year veteran of several branches of the INS, also doubted that employer sanctions could effectively discourage job-seeking immigration to the United States: “It is not effective to use it as the main demagnetizer” because “we just don’t have the people —200 agents nationwide to police a land of businesses” and “the convoluted

means we have to go through to get a fine [on an employer] are not effective at all." Wilson remarked that employer sanctions "might work as a matter of fairness" in the sense that for many years prior it had not been illegal to hire, to exploit, an "illegal" alien. But when, in conversation, I remarked to Wilson, "I don't know what the answer is [concerning employer sanctions]," he responded,

<quote>

We don't know what the question is. Congress postures about keeping out aliens, but really hundreds of thousands of persons contribute to the Social Security fund, plus employers know congressmen on a name-to-name basis. Even if they are not employers of aliens, they benefit from a saturated labor market. I don't care what law passes, they don't give the INS any money to enforce it. It takes nerve to say that the IRCA and IMMACT [the 1990 overhaul of U.S. immigration laws] are restrictionist immigration bills, to say in some manner they restrict immigration. To enforce them we'd have to put the U.S. Army on the southern border, but is it something we want? What is the solution to drugs, martial law? And if there are troops fighting, it's because hungry people want to work.

</quote>

Wilson understands that the question of the border is not only a matter of political economy (he made very perceptive remarks on the interchange between the immigration bar and the upper management of the INS and congressional staffs) but ultimately one of values and choice.

Distrust of polity and economic interests, however, generally leads INS officers to view themselves as misunderstood or unappreciated except by fellow members of the organization. INS officers internalized the abstract ideals of legal perfectionism (or tapped that potential in U.S. worldview as a whole) when they memorized the immigration and nationality law books. The de facto policy of tolerating undocumented labor immigration, a contradiction incompatible with the integrity of the self, is then objectified

and displaced onto U.S. society. The paradoxical pride in frustration is a negative esprit de corps. It favors internal closure (though not, notably, in the mature political understandings of Ronald Wilson), induces mistrust of criticism, and promotes mutual selfprotection. Negative esprit de corps contributes to the INS's inability to remove abusive officers before major human rights violations occur (Americas Watch 1993).

*** Alternatives within the Political Economy

Among the alternatives available to INS agents within the existing political economy, the most important is narcotics law enforcement, including work with other federal agencies. Large-scale antialien-smuggling work is another emerging priority in the U.S. Justice Department. Enormous material rewards in antinarcotics interdiction and investigation make it an alluring bureaucratic option and a self-replicating drive of the state apparatus. Asked "What do federal agencies fight over?" one INS officer deeply involved in interagency narcotics investigation replied,

<quote>

Not necessarily the lead agency role or credit for busts. Drugs are quadruple-counted anyway [e.g., DEA, Customs, State Police, FBI, etc.], so is money. They mainly fight over jurisdiction and the assets seized. The Feds get the cars, cellular telephones,- the FBI and the DEA have authorization to keep cash. Local agencies get money out of asset forfeiture to pay for administratively uncontrollable overtime.

</quote>

This structure of rewards releases energies pent up within the contradictory INS worldview. Deporting narcotics offenders or helping put them in jail satisfies INS officers because of the antidrug message currently being propagated in U.S. culture. By contrast, INS officers find little worth in

arresting “hard-working” immigrants whom, at least in stereotypical outline, they respect.

Frank Chavez grew up in a border city, part of the self-aware and critical Chicano generation. He is a native speaker of Spanish. A college graduate, he joined the Border Patrol after several years in a local police department that paid relatively poorly. Though he enjoyed the hard outdoor work, he soon grew tired of the endless routine of chasing, apprehending, and releasing aliens. He joked sarcastically, “Thar they go ... I joined the Border Patrol to chase tail, not the Highway Patrol to chase tail lights.” As do many Border Patrol agents interested in the more complex aspects of the law, he moved to Investigations, a branch which enforces immigration provisions in the interior. Here he has had several specialties, including antismuggling work and, recently, work on a well-funded interagency organized- crime drug enforcement task force. He offers Spanish- language skills and accumulated knowledge of border and immigrant communities that facilitate penetration by federal law enforcement. The INS, with its long contact with immigrants, provides ethnic network specialists to the U.S. state.

Chavez’s worldview is curious, for he horizontally segments elements of his critical Chicano self-awareness from other ideas that justify his role as an INS worker. He told me, for example, that fights occur between the Border Patrol and immigrants because of “the agents themselves”: “It comes down to language: use a verb any way you want, it’s their language, let them conjugate it. ‘iComo me llamoV [What is my name?] instead of ‘iComo se llama UstedV [What is your name?]. The alien doesn’t understand, so the agent starts to yell and hit.” Disrespect for the Spanish language is an underlying emotional issue in the town where Chavez comes from. When asked to free-associate on “aliens,” however, he gave the following moderately re- strictionist response: “Easy to deal with but there are too many of them for the country. They are uneducated, not tremendous skills with them, at least the ones I’ve dealt with; they do fill voids in some areas.” Chavez’s longer discussions of national immigration politics are equally fragmented horizontally. However, he has found a resolution to the contradictions of his worldview with narcotics investigations. Asked to free-associate on “accomplishments,” he responded, “All these years now in the INS I feel what I’ve accomplished is narcotics, put them in jail and hopefully back to their country.” Chavez’s experience is important because, its

particular Chicano variant aside, it is typical of that of a large number of INS agents who find new purpose and energy in the militarization of drug control on the Mexico-U.S. border and in immigrant communities throughout the United States. This development must concern us because of its potential for violence.

*** Conclusions

Does studying INS worldviews give us confidence that thought-work reveals the obscure links between interested power in the upper tiers of society and the selfpresented rationality and routine of bureaucracy? U.S. immigration policy simultaneously reinforces the citizenship discourse of the dominant U.S. society speaking to itself and avoids impeding the supply of cheap undocumented labor. U.S. policy must serve the latter goal covertly so as not to contradict the coherence of the monologue. While the outlines of the real U.S. immigration policy are well-known, it has proven difficult, from evidence skimmed only from the top of the bureaucracy (“the view from Washington”), to figure out how these contradictory processes take place. This becomes clear once we penetrate the bureaucracy and link thoughtwork to the demands of power.

The key power result demonstrated in this study is the pass-through arrest. The principal thought-work mechanism is the division of immigrants into illegal but honest workers and immoral drug and alien smugglers.[27] This conceptualization, in conjunction with workplace struggles between front-line INS officers and their managers, promotes the perpetual loop of voluntary departure and return. In turn, the daily workings of the voluntary-departure complex permit the nationwide diffusion of a new competitive-sector working class made up of Spanish-speaking immigrants who have entered the United States through the Mexican border (see, for example, Stull, Broadway, and Erickson 1992). The INS, then, is reshaping the class and ethnic landscape of the United States. The great difficulty of studying power with a microscope is connecting the magnified grains with the overall lines,- this study reveals that covert policies are thought out and applied by state workers, producing a new alignment of society.

The relationship of INS thought-work to human rights on the border is complex. Passivity and defiance are statements about the expected relationship between bureaucrat and nonbureaucrat. Defiance reverses the order of action; the immigrants take the initiative as they defy the INS officer. Human rights violations by INS officers often occur during informal punishment of conceptually “defiant” aliens. Defiance, such as rock throwing, occurs during crowd control in close proximity to the border, a situation mandated by the numerical approach to border control, and it is inherent in the armed struggle between the INS and narcotics smugglers. One must, then, consider defusing these two situations. INS officers, in fact, quite generally teach new agents how to avoid abuse through the summary concept of “common sense.” Common sense, because it recognizes the initiative of undocumented aliens and the reality of voluntary departure and return, requires INS officers to understand themselves as passive recipients of immigrant actions. The pervasive stress of the front-line INS job should be apparent, and thus the general atmosphere of abuse avoidance ought to impress us. This attitude defuses much immediate frustration, but it favors a besieged esprit de corps that in turn covers for agents who do abuse people’s safety and rights.

In light of these conclusions, the problems of violence in immigration law enforcement at the Mexican border should be addressed in three ways (supposing here no change in the nature of the immigration system itself): opening the INS to civilian inspection (including attention to training) to reduce defensiveness and increase the number of links with the public (American Friends Service Committee 1992:45), separating enforcement of narcotics law from enforcement of immigration law, and disconnecting the size of the INS budget from the number of annual apprehensions and other policing activities in the near-boundary area in favor of successful prosecution of alien smugglers and of employers of undocumented aliens.

The world is not just pervasively and boringly bureaucratic; it is remarkable, indeed frightening, for its repeated and violent battles between bureaucrats and the people they ostensibly seek to control. One way of viewing thought-work is as a single-stranded relationship of attempted control at exactly this point in the corporation or polity. Let us, then, use the thought-work concept to explore how bureaucracies generate chronic struggles and, indeed, conduct violence.

** Comments

*** Ronald Cohen

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Heyman has presented an interesting account of how boundary officials employ their authority. Boundary or “border” control has two meanings here. First, it refers to the implementation of regulations and policy at the edges of a bureaucracy by agents who must deal with publics (e.g., extension agents or missionaries). Second, and primarily in this article, it means official actions regulating noncitizen entry into a sovereign state. The empirical material on officials protecting state borders is well crafted, but the attempt to make these data contribute to theoretical advance, especially the use of the concepts of “thought-work” and “indifference,” calls for some discussion.

If I understand him, Heyman sees “thought-work” occurring when “a detailed division of labor partially routinizes the ‘manufacture’ of thoughts.” The thoughts are “bureaucratic” when there is an uncontrolled public beyond the border of the organization and the relations between official and public are potentially subordinate. The idea is Marxian (and Radcliffe-Brownian); thoughts are envisioned as products of social structure. But Heyman wants more complexity in that individuals bring their pasts, their intelligence, and their personalities to bear on this organizational influence. The resultant thoughts are seen as determinants of actions, and this determination is called “thought-work.” In addition, and curiously, Heyman believes that the basic social science (and biblical) issue of tension or “struggle” between person and role somehow gives his article a “Marxian slant.”

Using worldview as a major indicator, he assumes two kinds of information processing: the learning of a routinized corporate culture in which illegals are classifiable as good guys and bad guys, with appropriately sanctioned

responses to each, and the personal reaction of each individual that produces individualized adaptation to work. And the numbers and proportions of bad guys are increasing, increasing job tensions. I have gleaned this logic from the article, but in fact no general conception or explanation of the process or the reports by officials is attempted. Instead, we must be content with the metaphors-as-theory of the respondents. In one instance the process is said (by an actor in the situation) to be a form of “nonviolent warfare”; another describes job tension in “spatial” terms. Later still the same activity is referred to as an exhilarating sport. Here is where paradigms bump. Clearly, there are generalizable interactions between officials and illegals that can be applied elsewhere where similar conditions prevail. To remain so strictly phenomenological is to jettison the responsibility of the scholar to provide us with a more general understanding of such relationships. In its stead we are offered a theory conceptualizing how regulatory bureaucrats’ mental processes result in attitudes and behaviors.

The data are responses to questions concerning the protection of U.S. borders from entry by illegals. From these records Heyman asserts that he can make valid statements about the thoughts, mental processes, and consequent (or antecedent?) actions of the officials in tension-laden situations—all this from solicited responses to questions about their behavior and attitudes on the job. It strains credulity to say that interview material from recall is a valid record of the mental processes of officials at work in a complex conflicting and changing situation. Recall material is well known for its distortions under the best of circumstances. The reader interested in political-bureaucratic phenomena will also want to ask what, for example, are the influences of changing and distorted policy directives, how illegals react to differing forms of enforcement and regulation and to differing labor markets and varying demands by organized labor in the receiving country, and how all this is affected by changing conditions and conceptions of state sovereignty in the late 20th century.

It comes as no surprise that officials at borders having to do unpleasant work become “indifferent” to the plight of individuals. A moment’s thought (pace Heyman) leads to the logic that all bureaucrats who must counter or ration access to deeply felt needs of publics must contain tendencies to empathize with each individual under their authority. UN

officials dealing with Rwandan refugees could easily be described as “indifferent” when one observes their almost total concern for the delivery logistics of awesomely inadequate supplies. But their driving motives are clear—and certainly not indifferent to the deaths all around them. And they too, like these border officials, make triage decisions based on regulations, corporate culture, and personal experience. Yet, as many researchers including Heyman make clear, some empathy can and does occur even when indifference is demanded by the scarcities and authority structuring the situation. Indeed, the tension between role and person leading to unregulated exercise of power by a Schindler or an overzealous marine sergeant is the more profound issue raised here (see Oliner et al. 1992) though scarcely scratched by concepts like “thoughtwork” and “indifference.”

In sum, Heyman reports on and interprets how bureaucrats deal with unregulated power in controlling national borders. In doing so he breaks with traditional methods mandating a clear-cut separation of observation of patterned behaviors, reports by respondents about these actions, role requirements (official duties), and the attitudes to these obligations which personalize job behavior. The question we must ask is whether his novel approach moves us forward, backward, or sideways. In my own experience the traditional methodology has been a useful way of maintaining a healthy humility about the depth of our understanding of the human experience. Heyman is in danger of failing to acknowledge real barriers to knowledge. Febvre (1982) tells us what Rabelais’s 16th-century contemporaries believed or argued that he was doing within the strict regulations developed by the Inquisition and then asks the same questions of Rabelais’s own utterances. The writing style is that of a court of law, and the book ends with a tentative verdict after more than 500 packed pages of questions and interpretations. By suggesting that we can get at complex thought as an influence on action using simple ideas rather than sorting out the complexities involved, Heyman may be pointing towards a detour to superficiality rather than an improved highway to knowledge.

*** Jorge Durand

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Recent years have seen an important attempt among students of Mexico-United States migration to adopt new analytical approaches, employ new sources and methods, and incorporate themes traditionally overlooked. Heyman’s work belongs to this new current and seeks to confront the problem through an analysis of the Immigration and Naturalization Service, the police- bureaucratic agency responsible for controlling and channeling the migratory flows into the United States. Research on this theme is practically nonexistent despite its being one of the key elements of the migratory circuit. The INS furnishes abundant information but not about the INS. For knowing who its members are, what they do, and, above all, what they think, Heyman’s work is therefore indispensable and pioneering.

Since 1921, when the Border Patrol was founded, its principal mission has been to control and supervise the border with Mexico, and for many officers the work they perform is simply a game. Day after day for more than seven decades la Migra and los mojados have confronted each other. The playing field has traditionally been the border strip, the match is usually played by night, and its length is from sunset to sunrise; the rules are clear and well-known, and roughness is punished (sometimes with death); the players know each other perfectly well, and each ably plays his part, conscious of his limits and possibilities. The game has its season as well, the best matches taking place in the summer. The outcome is only partially known; a hundred or a thousand are captured in one night, but no one ever knows how many points the other team scored. It is precisely this difference that encourages the hope of playing again every day, every night. Unfortunately, in the past few years the narcotraffickers and their pursuers have appeared on the same playing field, making the situation more complex, dangerous, and potentially disastrous for those who are accustomed to playing peaceably year after year at the border crossing.

Heyman’s work considers the opinions, feelings, worldview, and view of the game held by those who work in the INS. As in all anthropological work, it is fascinating to read the frank statements of the Border Patrol officers who perform the bureaucratic tasks and those who work on the line of play. Also

suggestive is the bibliographic discussion that the author proposes and the interpretation of the information from the perspective of the anthropology of bureaucracy. Like any pioneering work, this one points to a series of gaps and leaves many questions and concerns unresolved. There is much work to be done in this new field of investigation. A good historical study of the INS seems indispensable, and it would be advisable to take into account undocumented Mexicans' views of the Migra. Finally, it is urgent to explore the dark and perverse world that makes use of this game to advance its own interests.

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Heyman's notion of "thought-work"—the assumptions embodied in the classifications, practices, and worldviews of an authoritative bureaucratic organization—links the central sociological problem of what Giddens (1984) calls the "constitution" of society to the more circumscribed terrain of the workplace, in this case the Mexican-American border. Earlier work such as that of Fallers (1974:8) brought the study of the nation-state into anthropological discourse by suggesting how such abstract notions as "citizen" and "state" were embodied in the implicit assumptions and practices of the "trivia" of interlocking local and localizing practices. However, the basic point of reference in such studies remained holistic notions of "culture" or "systems of meaning." In contrast, Heyman's "thought-work" implicitly builds on a notion of culture that is contested, partial, and historically specific, here making explicit the "constituting" practices and concepts of INS "thought-work" from the late 1940s to the present. The result is a persuasive account of how formal INS training, workplace socialization, key terms, and career paths and incentives create a set of practices defining a "new social alignment" of tolerated clandestine immigration which contradicts formal immigration policy but represents a viable compromise between conflicting forces and goals.

Heyman acknowledges that his study is not the first to address such issues; its originality rests with its clearly documented linkage between the microsociology of habits of work with habits of thought within the INS bureaucracy. In sociology, Crozier's (1971) study of office workers in two contrasting national settings pointed to differing implicit understandings of authority and responsibility which created remarkably different points of tension in formally identical bureaucratic organizations, and Jackall (1988) demonstrated the consequences of implicit workplace assumptions of loyalty, trust, and career among midlevel managers which often sharply contradicted formal institutional goals.

Heyman depicts how bureaucratic "thought-work" is created, sustained, and altered over time. His claim that INS "thought-work" is reshaping the U.S. class and ethnic landscape is too strong if read to imply that it is the single or dominant contributing factor. Likewise, his argument is stretched thin by the claim that INS "thought-work" produces "covert policy." More convincing is his account of how informal norms and incentives are "thought out and applied by state workers, producing a new alignment of society." He shows how the "contradictory processes" involved in implementing stated INS goals result in a heightened consciousness of "types" of illegal aliens and policy contradictions.

One can think of numerous situations to which Heyman's approach to "thought-work" readily applies— medical committees deciding who "merits" a transplant, health administrators distinguishing between "established" and "experimental" medical procedures to avoid politically damaging talk about "rationing" health care, overworked educators arbitrarily assigning low grades to suspected plagiarized papers rather than invoking increasingly unworkable administrative procedures, and police detectives skillfully using deception to get suspected criminals to implicate themselves without violating their constitutional rights. Collegial cohorts in each of these situations would be committing criminal or unethical acts by articulating "covert policy." In each case, however, their heightened sensitivity to the ambiguities and contradictions inherent in implementing any formal policy produces a "thought-work" partially masked from society at large and depending on implicitness to remain an "honest" and defensible exercise of "legitimate" authority.

Most bureaucratic knowledge and authority is partially masked from public view by a combination of complexity and either secrecy or nondisclosure. INS “thought-workers” may not be as constrained to secrecy as are those in political intelligence (Eickelman and Dennison 1994), but their habits of thought are shaped in parallel fashion through formal training and apprenticeship, the study of which enhances our understanding of culture and authority as partial, contested, and historically situated.

Heyman links the study of power with a microscope to the wider issues of how society is constituted—here the reshaping of the U.S. class and ethnic landscape. His approach is transparent in the sense that it can readily be adapted to the study of other “gray-area” exercises of bureaucratic authority —narcotics interdiction, money laundering, and the insertion of political appointees into ostensibly neutral bureaucratic organizations. It also lends itself readily to more conventional anthropological themes such as the habits of work and thought which produce “authoritative” educational and religious knowledge (Bourdieu 1967; Eickelman 1978, 1992).

It does not detract from Heyman’s argument to note that the policy recommendations in his penultimate paragraph for minimizing “violence in immigration law enforcement” are unlikely to be implemented in the near future. The very struggles over appropriations and jurisdictions that have led to the present INS bureaucratic charter and organizational framework inhibit any major organizational transformation. Nonetheless, his account of INS “thought-work” might ideally sensitize INS officers and trainees to the implications of their tasks, leading them to ameliorate existing habits of thought and work.

*** Don Handelman

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I restate my position here on bureaucracy and taxonomy, since it seems to be misunderstood. The most elementary premise of bureaucratic epistemology is that of taxonomy. There is no bureaucracy without classification, without the invention of categories of inclusion and exclusion. This premise is integral to bureaucracy whether it is viewed from within or from without, whether it is perceived to be rooted in metaphysics or rationalism, whether it is created in history or positioned situationally. The classification of target populations to elicit certain behaviors from them is the exercise of control. Bureaucratic classification impacts the social orders that generate this kind of organization of information. This impact is the exercise of power. Classification cannot be only an internal characterization of bureaucratic organization. Is this position essentialist? Can Heyman tell us of a “bureaucracy” that is not based on the cognitive work of classification and on the implementation of its taxonomies?

Other issues are more historically constituted and situationally positioned. These issues include whether bureaucratic taxonomies are organized systematically or systemically (Handelman 1990:77–81; n.d.J, how social categories are invented (e.g., Shamgar-Handelman 1981, 1986), how they are implemented, often with unexpected results (Handelman 1983), whether contacts between officials and target populations are fleeting and uniplex or of long duration and multiplex (Handelman 1976), and what conceptions of self and other, of group and category, are generated in the process. Bureaucracies are hierarchical organizations designed to create and implement taxonomies. Thus bureaucracies are ways of making, ordering, and knowing social worlds.

Ironically, this bureaucratic power to order is also that of changing social worlds either by moving persons among social categories or by inventing and applying such categories. Much bureaucratic work deals with the principled invention and application of taxonomies in order to organize numerous domains of living in statist social orders (e.g., Handelman 1994). Bureaucracies practice their taxonomies incessantly, molding phenomenal realities in part by altering the criteria of classifiers. Weber noted that real power is practiced through everyday administration in the modern state. Often, so too is real change. Numerous “means of production” are concentrated in bureaucracy and its political masters (Mayer 1944:60–61; Rizzi 1985 [1939]; Ziemer 1985 [1941]). Recently, Lea Shamgar-Handelman

and I suggested that “we should begin to speak of a bureaucratic mode of production: the ownership or management of the means to consciously produce and apply taxonomic schemes of social classification” (Shamgar-Handelman and Handel- man 1991:308). Bureaucracies produce control, as Heyman notes, but they do this by making, applying, and changing taxonomies in order to generate causal effects. Order and change are both integral to bureaucratic work. Bureaucracies do this work most effectively (in terms of a ratio between power and force that favors the former) when they are organized systemically, not only systematically.

Bureaucratic work, like the people who do it, often has hidden agendas that are intended to impact wider social orders. Heyman shows us an interesting contradiction between the protected ideology of citizenship and the practice of enabling labor to enter the U.S.A, in ways that keep this labor undocumented and cheap. One would think that decent investigative journalism would uncover this connection. Is the notion of “thoughtwork” illuminating in this regard? I doubt it. The sort of contradiction discussed and its relationship to com- monsensical thinking were addressed long ago (see Bittner 1967 on police work [enforcing the law versus keeping the peace] and Pollner 1987). Heyman concludes that the INS is “reshaping the class and ethnic landscape of the United States.” Of course it is. Bureaucracies make change. Through its bureaucratic practice the INS is producing a different taxonomy of the workforce that balances the political economy in such a way that the middle classes can still enjoy the fruits of others’ labors.

Some of Heyman’s informants conceptualize their border work as a game, something like hide-and-seek. It is a pity that we are not told more about this border within the border, this sealing-off of the serious national border within that of game. Entry into the make-believe of the game embraces the reality of paradox (Handelman 1991, 1987), through which the national border is recreated as an obstacle to be won or lost without serious consequence. For these officials this obstacle is in flux, permeable and changeable, subject to its own rules rather than to those of the state. These officials are adapting to the bureaucracy’s emergent classification of the workforce by divorcing themselves from the conflict between the overt agenda of their job and the practices of the political economy. Some years ago, the Hollywood imagination produced a bathetic film starring Jack Nicholson on the work of the Patrol at the Mexican border. The film reproduced the distinction that the

Patrol makes between “good illegals” and “bad smugglers” and ignored the political economy that produced this dichotomy. Did Heyman’s informants see the movie? Did it illumine their “thought-work”? Indeed, one may well ask, who is producing whom?

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Heyman gives a nuanced account of social actors’ responses to familiar dilemmas, and he offers especially critical insight into the contradiction between ostensible policy (exclusion of aliens) and actual practice (selective admission). Theoretically, however, his argument exhibits serious deficits: (1) inadequate development of such concepts as power and “thought-work,” (2) a persistent confusion between agents and formal institutions, and (3) a self-defeating misconstrual of existing arguments.

The clarification of key operational concepts is especially needed in dealing with power—which is nowhere defined but assumed as a reified force (“Power makes context stick”) even though the rich ethnographic detail shows up its complexity in practice. Practice, extensively theorized now in the anthropological literature and clearly accessible through the data, appears here only as a component of “thought-work.” If “thoughtwork” is a novel (and, on the face of it, improbable) high road to intentionality, a discipline long suspicious of such claims (see, e.g., Needham 1972) will want to know how the author finally broke through this conceptual barrier. If, in contrast (as I suspect), “thought-work” merely replaces—and at the same time conflates— practice and symbolism, the argument takes an analytic step backwards (though it does briefly separate practice and symbolism in the mechanistic observation that “a worldview is functionally required for thought-work”).

This conflation is parallel to Heyman’s second problem, the failure to distinguish adequately between bureaucratic agents and institutions. While

he shows eth- nographically how bureaucrats must constantly reframe the ostensible rules, thereby enabling “a policy that cannot be stated,” his “bureaucrats and antibureaucrats” make sense not as actual people but only as stereotypes or as positional roles and performances and thus as components of the symbolic panoply to which all the individuals in question hve selective recourse. Both bureaucrats and their clients cast blame on an impersonal bureaucratic “system”—not the actuality of administration but a shared stereotype that actors variously manage in the struggle for ascendancy.

Finally, Heyman misunderstands my approach in ways that undercut his own analysis. Thus, he asserts that my refusal to separate bureaucratic from other domains of symbolic action has led to an “Occidentalist” posture. Here, he has simply missed the point, although I do spell it out directly: “The term ‘Western’ ... is intentionally ironic. It enshrines a stereotype. The various countries [so] lumped together ... conventionally celebrate certain features that separate them from the rest of the world”—among them an equally stereotypical image of bureaucracy itself (Herzfeld 1992:2). Heyman compounds the irony: by attributing to my analysis the very literalism that it addresses—the bureaucratic habit of treating categories as ontologically fixed—he vindicates my insistence on the power of symbols. Of course bureaucracy is not uniquely “Western”—if that label means anything once Occidentalism is rejected. (I do in fact cite “non-Western” materials.) But critique parodies bureaucracy itself when it finds one guilty of entertaining stereotypes merely because one has described them—especially when the description was a critique of those same stereotypes!

Heyman should recognize the force of this objection. Without it, his own analysis becomes vulnerable. In ably describing American individualism or its administrative foil and recognizing in these the “roots” of bureaucratic perspectives (see especially n. 28), he elucidates a dominant self-stereotype-with even older “roots” in a European model that, in the second irony of his position, underlies Carrier’s (1992) generous citation of my work (see Herzfeld 1987:82–87). In locally and globally contextualizing symbolic values, Heyman is countering Occidentalism; it hardly helps his argument to claim that I am not.

In opposing “power” to symbolic “roots,” moreover, Heyman offers no alternative explanation of how power works through symbols—their performativity, an important aspect of which is their capacity for evoking, often by etymological allusion (“roots”), the authority of the past. Physical factors such as military might obviously do dramatically affect power relations. But—in a third irony—Heyman’s failure to recognize the force of symbolic action reproduces neo-Cartesian idealizations of “Western rationality” as transcending the symbolic.

Such is the force of Vico’s precocious—and explicitly etymological—analysis of state power and its connections to scholarship (see Struever 1983, Herzfeld 1987). Heyman’s fine material supports a culturally grounded critique of power. His dismissal of the performative approach as a concern with inert, reified symbols, by contrast, reinforces the very stereotypes that his critique could so much more usefully have addressed.

*** Alex Stepick

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When I first started working in 1979 on the issues of Haitian refugees, I was a Congressional Fellow working for Congressman Mickey Leland and the Congressional Black Caucus, the only organization at the time demanding fair and equal treatment of Haitians. My exposure to and involvement with Black Caucus members, human rights organizations, and Haitian advocacy organizations had convinced me that Haitians were indubitably political refugees. The infamous Haitian paramilitary Tonton Macoutes were both ubiquitous and unremittingly predatory. In attempting to alter the U.S. policy towards Haitians, I and many others had numerous meetings with State Department and Immigration and Naturalization Service representatives. They all firmly argued that Haitians were not political refugees but economic migrants akin to Mexicans crossing the U.S. border. At first I thought that these bureaucrats were simply being disingenuous, creating a transparent rationale for a logically unsustainable policy. After all, the evidence of conditions in Haiti was abundant and clear. As my work went on I came to

realize that these bureaucrats genuinely believed that Haitian boat people were indeed fleeing fundamentally for economic reasons. Indeed, the bureaucrats had a mirror image of me and my allies that I had of them—they viewed us as offering a flimsy excuse for simply trying unfairly to get people we favored into the United States!

This recognition of two seemingly contradictory views of what each perceived as a clear and coherent, singular reality set the research agenda on Haitian refugees that I followed for more than a decade. On the basis of my Washington experience with State Department and INS bureaucrats, I argued that foreign policy concerns drove U.S. refugee policy, that Cubans were favored because they were fleeing communism and Haitians disfavored because they fled a right-wing dictatorship friendly to the United States (Stepick 1986).

Moving to Miami clouded my understanding. I learned of unabashed racist comments and attitudes on the part of local INS officials, and, most important, a former director of the INS, Leonel Castillo, revealed that a prominent South Florida congressman had said, “We don’t want any more god damn’ black refugees in South Florida!” (Stepick 1992). Seldom do anthropologists or other researchers obtain such an immediate insight into power. We more commonly look from various angles, usually below and perhaps from the side, and attempt to infer the motivations and actions of those more powerful than we and removed from us. Understanding bureaucrats and bureaucracies is particularly difficult because not only are we, the researchers, outsiders but even the bureaucrats themselves are embedded within social relationships that constrain while legitimizing their actions. As Heyman demonstrates, we must situate our analyses, our generally detailed ethnographies, within a particular economic and political context. Even then, as my own experiences with Haitian refugees reveal, our conclusions can be no more than tentative, contingent upon the particular positions and perspectives we have been privileged to assume.

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25 x 94

The Mexico-U.S. border is a porous boundary which represents opportunities and barriers to diverse people on both sides. National governments thousands of miles away manipulate this border for a multitude of objectives. In the NAFTA era the barriers to the flow of capital and goods are reduced while both governments employ strategies to regulate the flow of labor. Heyman's article makes an important contribution to our understanding of this process by focusing on the INS. It helps to demystify the application and use of power and shows how apparently contradictory actions are linked, in the process developing the concepts of bureaucratic thought and work. It raises many issues, but for the purpose of this response we want to focus on just two: (1) the nature of an international border and how it influences the bureaucracies designed to regulate it and (2) the changing nature of the political economy in which the bureaucracy is located and its implications for Heyman's model.

While many people crossing the U.S.-Mexican border are not from the border region, a significant number of people crossing are from border towns. As Heyman's examples illustrate, many families living on the border are binational. They work and socialize in a "community" that transcends the national boundary. The very nature of the border generates "border rules" that are bicul- tural. The INS, imposed from a distant capital, is to them much more foreign than the people they know living on the other side. The fact that INS personnel is drawn from other regions and rotated in and out of specific border areas tends to underline the separation of the bureaucracy from the community. This is part of the control of the thought process described by Heyman. People from the border region develop an understanding of the international boundary through daily experiences which have generated a rich folklore about the INS and other border challenges. They see inequalities such as the differentiation by nationality discussed by Heyman as by-products of the politics of Washington and Mexico City. On the Mexican side, "legal" migrants and local residents prefer to encounter an Anglo rather than a Latino guard because they feel that the Latino officers are often more abusive. This view is strikingly different from the one Heyman found in his interviews with the guards themselves. We would suggest that

the next stage of research on bureaucracies, particularly bureaucracies located in culturally distinct localities, include a focus on their interaction with the local people.

Political economy is an important dimension of the analysis but does not receive full conceptual elaboration here. As a result, the use of political economy is static rather than dynamic. The fact that employer sanctions in the United States are more symbolic than real is a key point of Heyman's analysis, and therefore the analysis might link fluctuations in the manipulation of sanctions with changes in regional, national, and international labor markets. Migration is stimulated by dynamics operating on both sides of the border. For example, privatization programs are forcing more Mexicans to leave the countryside in search of jobs. At the same time, NAFTA is generating other changes, facilitating the flow of capital and goods but not labor. These processes are linked and must, in one way or another, have an impact on the INS. Equally important, there is considerable discord between some state and national immigration perspectives on illegal immigration. This is currently being played out in both California and Florida. Changes in markets and government strategies on both sides of the border will influence migration flows, markets, and capital flows, which in turn will be reflected in government policies and INS actions. Heyman makes a contribution to our understanding of the links between broader changes in the political economy and institutional structure and culture. The rapid pace of change in the two countries and in Mexico-U.S. relations will give him an opportunity to refine his conceptualization of these links. We look forward to the continuing research on this process.

** Reply

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The comments pay most attention to the concept of "thought-work"; perhaps this simplification is inevitable. Let me, then, remind readers of the major

directions of my argument: What is the anthropology of bureaucracies to do? Will it evolve as one of many small, divisive specialties, or will it become one of a few major lines of inquiry into “the ‘constitution’ of society” (Eickelman, quoting Giddens; also see Guyer 1993)? Our choice of tools will depend on our purposes in using them: I have suggested that we identify our subject matter as complex and unequal societies (delineated principally through other rubrics, such as tributary states or capitalist states and corporations) with bureaucracies playing particular roles within them and the goal of our study not as models of organizations but as classes of “power results.” This contrasts with the “bureaucratic society” or “bureaucratized life” that Weber would have seen as our subject matter. I consider this suggestion debatable and hope that it will attract argument. (Handelman proposes a bureaucratic mode of production, which I suppose might fall within the bureaucratic-society approach.)

I therefore welcome a variety of approaches to bureaucracy (not exclusively my own approach) that contribute to understanding issues beyond bureaucracy. I welcome Handelman’s restatement of his position on taxonomy, involving less emphasis on the history of European ideas than in his 1981 article. Taxonomy is a central part of bureaucratic thought-work, as I recognized when I wrote that “internal characteristics such as … Handelman’s taxa reveal much about external relationships between the controllers and the controlled.” When Handelman writes here that “bureaucracies are hierarchical organizations designed to create and implement taxonomies,” we are led to ask where the taxonomies come from and what implementation does to people.

The notion of thought-work is an effort to highlight just such connections. As Eickelman writes, it “links the central sociological problem of what Giddens (1984) calls the ‘constitution’ of society to the more circumscribed terrain of the workplace.” This concept arises from my critical reading of works on bureaucratic thought; its intent is not to dismiss the ideas they contain but to join thought processes with the similarly rich literature on workplace negotiation. That is, thoughtwork, perhaps just as a phrase and just by its hyphen, directs our attention to linkages between multiple scales of phenomena.

The thought-work concept also provocatively points to the problem of why the large bureaucratic form (employing many people and expending many resources but yielding few tangible products) occurs throughout unequal state societies. Weber's explanation was rationality of administration,- I have shifted the argument toward the chess match of bureaucrat and subject. If regulated thought-work is needed for anticipatory control of other humans, bureaucracy is productive (in a morbid sense) rather than counterproductive. Finally, I offer a four-part framework for the study of power in and around bureaucracy. I would like to see these issues receive more debate.

Cohen criticizes my reliance on interviews and points to the difficulty of connecting interviews with behavior. As my methodological note indicates, I conducted observations in all the types of workplaces discussed, though for limited time spans because of the inefficiencies of securing research clearance from the INS. (This will continue to be a problem in the field of bureaucracy.) I interviewed not just 1 person but 104, including persons who were in direct conflict with each other. More important, worldview is appropriately approached with interview evidence. Worldview elements crop up in narrative form. Even in stories that were ostensibly about recalled behavior I sought worldview themes. Beyond this, I interpreted interviews as second-order rationalizations of work routines—a level of analytical sophistication that I think is appropriate to the evidence.

Stepick and Cohen rightly focus on the multiple layers of words and behavior in the study of power and thus the potential for getting an incomplete picture. Durand and Eickelman likewise suggest that though the INS is a powerful bureaucracy, it is not the only actor in the constitution of immigration,- I take this as a fair statement of the limitations of this work. Stepick's experience with the INS in Florida indicates, however, that it is better to penetrate power and have our ideas supplemented and revised later on than to avoid power holders because they are slippery. The policy level in this paper was indeed sketchy and static, as Whiteford and Chavez note, and we do have before us the extraordinary unfolding of NAFTA. I eschewed lengthy asides on policy; my analyses are developed at length in my manuscript "Immigration Law Enforcement and the Superexploitation of Undocumented Aliens." More important, I argue that the ethnography of bureaucratic labors offers a window on the obscured aspects of political economy. I am uncomfortable with the centrifugal fragmentation of political

economy, interaction, and meaning in anthropology, and I seek ways in which meaning and interaction can be used from a political-economic point of view. Cohen raises another reasonable criticism—that in the INS case-study I provide only subject-near, loose generalizations. It is clear that this is an exploratory runthrough of my concepts. I agree that we need middlerange generalizations about typical contexts and typical modes of bureaucratic thought-work and action. With

Eickelman, I hope that thought-work will prove “transparent” and available for other contexts. I look forward to global comparative work.

Probably the thorniest problem some commentators find in the idea of thought-work is that it renders the relationship of thought, action, and societal result too direct. Herzfeld raises and assaults a straw man when he argues that I propose and fail to sustain thought-work as a “high road to intentionality.” Nowhere do I claim that conscious thought in general deliberately constitutes social order. What I write about in this paper is a peculiar type of workplace. In this workplace, workers have been trained and supplied with limited bodies of information. Their behavior and productivity are monitored. They write up cases,- they leave a paper trail. They are subject to supervision, and they are fearful of discipline and second-guessing from above. If they stray too far, they will be fired or relegated to awful jobs. (I write about a peculiar world that many persons, though few university professors, inhabit.) The range of thoughts in this context is restricted, and the relationship of social structure, thought, and action is to some extent deterministic. Above a certain level of power, it is ethically responsible to speak of an intentional design of society. Eickelman is correct when he says that my theory of culture and meaning is partial, not totalistic. Furthermore, though the relationship of thought and function is complicated, it does not have to be severed. Cohen wants my paper to be more behavioral, and Herzfeld wants it to be more concerned with nondeterministic meaning. Perhaps it is a good sign that I have landed in between.

Herzfeld believes that I have reduced the symbolic approach to bureaucracy to “inert” symbols and then dismissed it. I reject his suggestion that I fail to “recognize the force of symbolic action” and instead “reproduce neo-Cartesian idealizations of ‘Western rationality’ as transcending the symbolic.”

This paper—about worldview, not rational calculation or even quasi- rational rules of thumb—is loaded with the performance of symbols. For example, I take up and indeed endorse Herzfeld's idea of indifference on the part of inspectors (whom I observed) performing the symbolic play of citizens and outsiders. I would rather characterize our disagreement as a matter of time-scale. The title of Herzfeld's book has two elements, representing a book that takes several positions: The Social Production of Indifference and Exploring the Symbolic Roots of Western Bureaucracy. I emphasize the likelihood that immediate workplace conditions incline workers to use any manip- ulable symbol set in order to express indifference. Herzfeld emphasizes the time-depth and generality of one symbol set: "this formalism draws on Judeo-Christian and Indo-European concepts of the superiority of mind over matter, of thinkers over actors" (1992:19). (I do recognize that Herzfeld, by emphasizing symbolism, exercises skepticism about the reality of that formalism.)

This is a clarifying discussion because the INS performance at the border includes both very short-term, highly plastic uses of symbols and symbol sets of the medium term, for example, of U.S. citizenship as a privileged but democratic inner circle. The shorter-term— the social construction of a particular workplace— requires some immediate political economy. Likewise, when we consider medium-term symbols, we call on a historical political economy, for example, to explore symbols of citizenship within a typology of modem nation-states (Turner 1990; Mann 1993:18–21, 44–91). I accept the need to consider more fully the efficacy of symbols at this time scale.

Herzfeld argues that my actors "make sense not as actual people but only as stereotypes or as positional roles and performances." Yet I have included informative biographical details about them within the limits of anonymity. They argue with each other and with the organization, and their job-related emotions are palpable. An adequate interpretive ethnography, of course, comments on the positional roles of actors and generalizes to some necessary extent about them. Clearly, practice theory involves more than just open-ended play. Practice analysis requires some theory and portrait of structure within it (Bourdieu 1977:3–4). Clearly, we need an idea of enduring symbols, but we also need political economy or some organized consideration of the issues that political economy raises. I underline my comment that "bringing the concept of power to studies of bureaucracies is

and undoubtedly will continue to be more challenging than bringing the concept of culture to them.”

I call for all anthropologists who work, participate, and observe in bureaucracies to create a reflective and critical literature on bureaucracies in unequal societies. I urge anthropologists to take advantage of experiences with development agencies, with medical delivery systems, with governmental and nongovernmental organizations, with program reports, etc. I urge that this literature go beyond advice on practice to the comparison and creation of middle-range generalizations from this material. The anthropology of bureaucracies will be central to vital topics facing anthropology such as the environment and ethnic relations in state systems —furnishing the principal lines of questioning of the “anthropology of trouble,” as Roy Rappaport (1993) has called it, and suggesting connections to his idea of maladaptive systems.

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[1] I have been much influenced in this passage by the contributors to Fox (1991), especially on the question how anthropology might escape what Trouillot (1991) calls the “primitive slot.”

[2] This is particularly disappointing in view of Cohen’s anthropological interest in the broad sweep of human history and politics.

[3] Eickelman (1978) discusses traditional Islamic learning in a manner that usefully contrasts with bureaucratic thought-work. He likewise employs the idea that specific modes of thought-work, in this case the ability to converse in quotations from the Koran, produce social relationships of a particular order.

[4] Here, of course, I follow Weber’s distinction between bureaucratic authority and patrimonial or other types of authority. Whereas Weber tends to characterize bureaucracy in terms of its internal characteristics, however, I emphasize the relationship between the bureaucrat and the recipient of control. I am much influenced by Elliot Leyton’s (Handelman and Leyton 1978) description of the incongruities of patronage and bureaucratic power in Newfoundland. I draw my vocabulary from Wolf (1966:89–91), who addresses the changing relationship of peasant classes to the larger social order, including bureaucratization as a vertical and single-stranded relationship.

[5] My idea of thought-work draws inspiration from the radical literature on workplaces, especially Burawoy's (1979) analysis of bureaucratic control arising in manufacturing situations where workers retain, within limits, skill and pace discretion.

[6] Baba (1989) effectively reviews the possibilities and limitations of the concept of organizational culture and points to the role of power, especially in recasting official organizational "cultures" as managerial ideologies.

[7] The illusion of bureaucratic perfection and the ideology of rationality may emerge in part as a by-product of bureaucratic work processes, especially through the brief glimpses that nonbureaucrats receive when they obtain the end products of the organization's work. Bureaucratic work is internally conflictive but appears, in the single-stranded relationship to the exterior, to be definitive (since it is the final result, not the midpoint, of struggles and routines) and rational (since any position in the struggles and routines will always utilize one among many possible modes of linkage to explicit written control rules.) There are, of course, many other ways in which recent societies try to inculcate the bureaucratic "state idea." This one, however, contrasts remarkably with the modes of legitimation and mystification required for multistranded patrimonial or other control relationships in which the two parties know considerably more about each other.

[8] I am quite concerned about the portability of this framework, especially from a well-funded agency of a core state whose control operations are reasonably clear to bureaucracies in weaker states. In the latter, the nation-state bureaucracy form has been adopted, but the actions of bureaucrats may differ radically from formal objectives (Migdal 1988). Likewise, we witness the superimposition of formal corporate forms on family-based capitalism. I hope, in fact, that my framework will guide us in useful directions. If we can discover a real INS immigration policy only in the thoughtwork-laden job struggles of INS employees, the same framework may prove useful in situations where the relationship of bureaucratic behavior and formal goals is completely obscure. We must, however, abandon the idea that the analytically informative power results are the overt power objectives of the organization or, if the organization fails to do what it sets out to do, that its bureaucrats accomplish

“nothing.” Among other factors, we must pay attention to the struggles of bureaucrats with nonbureaucrats in specific historical and cultural contexts, to the class position of bureaucratic workers in specific societies, to the actual content of daily work (looking into and going beyond observations on the absence of work inside some organizations), and to the work process as a thought-generator operating with culturally available knowledges and modes of learning. Migdal’s (1988:238–58) discussion of the real work of weak state “implementors” demonstrates many of these inquiries, while Eickelman’s (1988) study of the Omani intelligence service traces a core state form in the real political world of one Arab Gulf state.

[9] Organizational worldview is, of course, part of the broad societal worldviews from which members were recruited. This helps explain struggles between dominant-group-origin bureaucrats and subordinate populations of very different origins and the disparity between the powerful assumptions of societal worldview and the realities of highly supervised and constrained bureaucratic jobs.

[10] The INS fieldwork was conducted from December 1991 to June 1992. One hundred and four interviews were carried out with officers and managers of seven operational branches of the INS in two regions on the Mexican border: San Diego County, California, the highest-volume legal and undocumented crossing area, and southern Arizona, a lower-volume entry zone but one deeply involved in drug interdiction. The selection of interviewees was opportunistic,- however, the distribution of interviews closely matches the sex and race composition of officers in the INS Western Region, confirmed by INS affirmative action statistics for the specific ranks. Although I obtained INS permission to conduct interviews and in some cases managers suggested interviewee names, there was little deliberate managerial guidance of interviews; several times I was directed to speak with articulate in-house critics, and remarks were remarkably candid throughout. In addition, I observed routine INS operations, including those remarked on by informants here, and interviewed persons outside the INS including lawyers and other immigration advocates in order to double-check statements made by INS employees.

Interviews had a uniform structure: they included inquiries on personal background, recruitment into the INS, training, and a chronological career history with questions about work settings and job duties. This interview format allowed, however, for open- ended elaboration and questioning as the exchange developed. Interviews were hand-recorded nearly verbatim at the time of the interview. The interview was closed by asking all informants to free-associate on terms intended to reveal concepts of self and other: “INS,” “aliens,” “Mexico,” “American public,” “American politicians,” “accomplishments,” and “frustrations.” The interviews were then coded in terms of worldview universals drawn from Kearney (1984), read qualitatively for the particular content of the universals and their gestalt, and summarized. Rather than aggregate these summaries, I here present selected interviews at sufficient length to develop the personal contexts and gestalts of individuals. I have chosen not to represent a fictitious average INS agent by selecting examples that seem to support my overall impression; rather, I have deliberately selected interviews for diversity of worldview gestalts and political opinions and then looked for commonalities. In selecting interviews I have also represented the diversity of gender, race, rank, and INS career-starting date. Because of the multitude of work duties in the INS, I have restricted myself to describing two major contexts of law enforcement at the Mexican boundary itself: Border Patrol line watch and port-of-entry inspection.

[11] Strauss (1990) contrasts learned ideological propositions, which take the form of context-invariant, formulaic statements, with more loosely linked thoughts arising from the contemplation of particular contexts. Informants move toward one of three types of resolutions: vertical containment, choosing an ideological schema over implicit alternatives; horizontal containment, isolating contradictory alternatives; and integration, a nested resolution of all layers of thought. The different types of resolution result in more rigid or more contextual thought-guides to action, a consideration of great importance for a study of bureaucratic conflicts with non- bureaucratic populations.

[12] I cannot discuss at length the politics of de facto U.S. undocumented immigration policy, but generally I locate it in the simultaneous production of appearance and reality as described here; see, for example, Calavita’s

(1990) application of the notion of “symbolic law” to INS enforcement of employer sanctions.

[13] Calavita (1992) shows how economic interests have penetrated the INS but only for the bracero contract-labor period prior to 1965. Harwood (1986) provides a reliable survey of INS enforcement in the undocumented immigration period, but it is written from a politically conservative viewpoint that does not undertake to explore this issue.

[14] It is worth emphasizing the relative infrequency of human rights abuses by the INS and framing the issue in terms of abuseavoiding as well as abusive tendencies. The most comprehensive report (American Friends Service Committee 1992:19) cites an annual average of 425 abuses (though others may remain unreported), while the INS performs over 1 million annual apprehensions and roughly 400 million inspections, the vast majority on the Mexican border.

[15] The key Spanish test in the probationary year after training includes not only grammar and vocabulary but also a conversational component that serves as an attitude test, rewarding neophyte officers for conforming to group norms of active rather than passive work.

[16] For this material I draw on an INS extension course with study material and exams, including a detailed outline of the Border Patrol Academy syllabus (U.S. INS n.d.)

[17] This district director had a policy of refusing to parole exclusion cases out of detention and justified this precisely as a deterrent to a feared greater flow.

[18] Here the pronoun “you” initially drew me, the questioner, into the concerns of a Border Patrol manager while the shift to the rhetorically more powerful “we” heightened identification with the defense of the U.S. citizenry.

[19] This and all subsequent names are pseudonyms. Some personal details have been altered to prevent identification.

[20] A source of frustration here is not just voluntary departure but also the INS officer's sense that U.S. attorneys rarely prosecute small-scale alien smuggling and that sentences are short, sometimes limited to time already served (see Toney 1977).

[21] There is a glaring need for ethnography on Mexican and Central American ideas of the INS, in particular of just and unjust actions by INS officers and of low-level or emotionally motivated resistance such as rock throwing and insults (see Heyman 1991:18). One crucial nexus at which this could be studied is the intersection of individual migrant narratives with collective representations of the anonymous INS in Mexican popular culture and folklore.

[22] Joey Corrales, a first-line supervisor working south of San Diego, described passive stress: "Yes, I have cautioned somebody. You see an individual agent who is very emotional because of the position they are assigned, for example the [Tijuana River] levee where you are in very close proximity to the aliens. When they are not in control of the levee, they feel very stressed, excited, short-tempered. I talk to the agent at the scene, let the agent go work somewhere else or leave the area, relax. It's stressful to catch a lot of aliens, and even more to see a lot get away, so the first one you catch, that one gets all your anxiety. Agent X is particularly bothered by seeing aliens get away, so I don't assign him to those positions."

[23] Work conditions are appalling through no fault of the INS managers,- they are a result of the enormous volume of pedestrian and vehicular traffic at the Mexico-U.S. border.

[24] Of my interviewees, 58% started their INS careers in the Border Patrol and 28% in inspections. Only 14% started in any other branch. These two

paths, then, likely strongly influence INS worldviews as a whole. My interviewees as a whole were 32% Latino; 36% of the Border Patrol officers/managers and 71% of the inspectors/managers were Latino. The Border Patrol tends to separate Mexican-border Latinos and Anglos from their local upbringing and instill a borderwide organizational culture; 56% of Border Patrol officers grew up in proximity to the border, but only 8% were working near their original homes, and these had all been reassigned from distant locations on the border. In contrast, Inspections hiring is done by the port of entry and thus tends to be local; 89% of inspectors were from the border zone, and 59% were working in their hometowns.

[25] I posed two questions: “What were your thoughts as a Hispanic when you went to work for the INS?” and “Did you discuss your decision to work for the INS with your family or friends?”

[26] Green is the color of the Border Patrol uniform; it is used with multiple shades of meaning in the INS to identify with, or criticize, the traditionalistic side of the Border Patrol.

[27] There is, I think, no justification for the assumption that INS arrest or categorization effectively disciplines undocumented workers. Delgado (1993) has demonstrated, through a study of unionization, that undocumented workers’ fear of the INS is circumstantial rather than pervasive and controlling. I consider it much more likely that INS pseudodisciplinary concepts originate in the dominant citizen society from which INS officers come and that such INS behavior speaks, in the media and the mouths of facile politicians, to the very same audience. If INS policing does differentiate an undocumented population and create conditions for its exploitation, then it does so, paradoxically, because most undocumented entrants avoid the grasp of the state by entering into extralegal conspiracies such as smuggling and job-finding networks (Heyman n.d.).

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[[e-o-essays-on-the-future-of-oman-in-the-wilson-qua-1.png][Omani children celebrating National Day (November 18). Omanis have rarely failed to charm foreign guests. Writing in 1982, Norwegian anthropologist Unni Wikan noted their “delicate style of grace, tact, and humility, the quietness and control in manner and speech, the calm and gentle integrity that distinguish them, be they girls or boys, women or men. ”]]

* Oman

— When Oman’s English-educated Sultan Qabus visited the White House in April 1983, President Reagan genially cited his guest’s accomplishments as well as a shared enthusiasm for horses and for Gilbert and Sullivan. For his part, the sultan said: “We are under no illusions. We realize that the important geopolitical position we occupy at the mouth of the Persian Gulf and the unstable situation that exists... make it imperative that we develop our country and its defenses.” The sultan noted U.S. military aid and his own oilrich country’s strong links to the West, unique among Arab nations. Here, Calvin H. Allen, Jr., sketches the long exotic history of — Oman. And Mark N. Katz looks at the sultan’s independent fiefdom on the strategic Strait of Hormuz, not far from the battlefields of the continuing Iran-Iraq war.

** A Separate Place

by Calvin H. Allen, Jr.{1}

Two things struck early European visitors to Oman: its heat and its desolation. In 1684, the Dutchman John Stuys compared living in Oman to roasting in a “boiling cauldron.” Alexander Hamilton, a British traveler in Muscat in 1715, claimed that the Omanis roasted fish on the rocks. Upon his arrival in 1787, William Francklin complained that “the whole country round this place is one continued solid rock.” Others might have echoed these remarks, but many died before they could record their thoughts for posterity. The first three agents of the British East India Company, for example, expired of heat stroke, as did two American missionaries during the 1890s.

First impressions, however, can be deceiving. Climate and geography have played vital roles in Omani history, but in a more benevolent manner than early Western visitors cared to acknowledge.

Located along the northern edge of the Indian Ocean monsoon system, Oman, unlike its neighbor Saudi Arabia, receives summer rains that have sustained local agriculture for almost 5,000 years. Although it occupies the southeastern portion of the Arabian Peninsula, Oman has long been virtually an island unto itself, surrounded by the vast desert of the Rub’ al-Khali (“Empty Quarter”) and Wahibah Sands to the west and south and the Gulf of Oman and the Arabian Sea to the north and east. With few exceptions, as historian Robert Landen observes, the Omanis’ “contacts with the rest of the world have been... via the sea.” Coastal cities served as entrepots that provided not only access to foreign markets, but exposure to foreign influences, especially from India and East Africa.

*** Spine and Stomach

Thus isolated from the rest of Arabia by geography, Oman evolved independently from its neighbors. Despite a history of chronic internal feuds, the country has nonetheless managed to forge a national identity that dates

back to A.D. 750, when the Omanis, among the earliest converts to Islam, elected their first spiritual leader, or imam. Oman’s strategic location invited foreign invasions, but it also provided a base for a powerful maritime empire. Today, the Saudis occasionally criticize Omanis as “non-Arabs”; but to Omanis, the Saudis—with their relatively young 200-year-old kingdom— seem unsophisticated arrivistes.

Roughly the size of Kansas, Oman is divided into three regions: Ru’us al-Jibal, also known as the Musandam Peninsula, a mountainous exclave jutting into the Strait of Hormuz; Dhufar, the southern province, by far the most pleasant part of Oman with its moderate temperatures and summer rains; and Oman Proper, the country’s heartland, which includes the cities of Muscat and Nizwa.

Arab geographers have compared Oman Proper to the human body, with the Hajar Mountains (the “spine”), the Batinah (the “stomach”), a narrow coastal plain, to the east, and the Dhahirah (the “back”), the barren, interior gravelly plateau that merges with the Rub’ al-Khali, to the west. Omani civilization has its roots in the outwash plains of the Hajar Mountains near Nizwa, where during the fourth millennium B.c. early farmers took advantage of water sources in the gravel of the wadis (river beds) to plant wheat, barley, and sorghum. They domesticated the date palm and the camel, built simple stone burial cairns and temples, and smelted copper for use in trade with Sumer, the Indus Valley, and East Africa. By the end of the third millennium, however, camel nomadism began to replace settled agriculture, probably due to a drier climate.

During the seventh century B.C., Persian settlers, encouraged by the expansion of Iran’s Achaemenid Empire, came across the Gulf and took control of the country. They began building the falaj irrigation systems that still form the basis for Omani agriculture. Elaborate tunnels, barrages, storage tanks, and surface channels enabled local farmers to tap water from a wide area to irrigate not only dates and wheat but bananas, grapes, limes, apricots, and mangoes.

[[e-o-essays-on-the-future-of-oman-in-the-wilson-qua-2.jpg][With an area of 82,030 square miles. Oman has the second lowest population density (after Saudi Arabia) among its Gulf neighbors. X long-simmering border dispute between Saudi Arabia and Oman has left the boundaries between the two countries undefined.]]

The spread of the falaj system created a scattered network of small agricultural settlements across the country. More importantly, it fostered an elaborate social structure. The falaj played a part in everything from setting up crop schedules to calculating taxes. Agents, shareholders, and laborers not only oversaw the irrigation of date palms, but arranged for specified amounts of water to be distributed to a village’s visitors and its poor.

Legend has it that the first wave of Arab migrants arrived in Oman after the bursting of the massive Marib Dam in Yemen had, according to the Koran, “made [the Arabs] bywords and scattered them abroad.” Whether this is true or not, by the sixth century A.D., the Persians were forced to recognize Arab autonomy and appoint an Arab as julanda (ruler) over the interior Omani tribes. Within a century, the Arab julandas had accepted a new faith, Islam, and had driven the Persian governor from Oman.

Islam brought few other changes. The caliphs in Medina and later in Damascus relied on the julandas to rule over the province. Located on the fringes of the Arab empire, Oman became a refuge for religious dissidents, notably the followers of ’Abd Allah bin Ibad, a seventh-century Kharijite teacher from Basrah in Iraq. Unlike their Shi’ite or Sunni brethren, the Kharijite “Ibadis” rejected hereditary leadership of the Muslim community. Instead, the Ibadis held that any physically fit Muslim male, well versed in Islamic law, was eligible for election by the menfolk as imam. Less fanatical than other Kharijite sects, the Ibadis also forbade the killing of other Muslims and were generally tolerant of non-Ibadis, who could marry Ibadis, testify in court proceedings, and inherit property.

*** Hinawi versus Ghafiri

Oman proved fertile ground for Ibadi missionaries, and the collapse of the Ummayad caliphate in A.D. 750 provided them with an opportunity to establish their “kingdom of God on earth.” Ibadism has been, and continues to be, the country’s most powerful unifying force. A political as well as religious figure, the elected imam became an important rallying point for Oman’s quarreling tribes. After rebuffing an invasion launched by the new caliphate in Baghdad, the Omanis enjoyed a period of peace under benevolent imams who, as one Omani chronicler put it, “walked in the way of truth, justice, and integrity, decreeing what was right and forbidding what was wrong.”

But while the imamate system promised unity, its democratic nature also invited discord. The deposition of the aged imam Salt bin Malik in 886 ended a brief golden age. In a pattern that would persist over the ages, Oman’s 200-odd tribes fought among themselves as the clerics debated the legality of Salt’s deposition and argued over a successor. Divided by geneology and religious faction, the tribes fell into two separate camps whose rough outlines have survived into the present day. The Yemenis tended to be Ibadi; the Nizar, predominantly Sunni. During the 1720s, a civil war again broke out between the two confederations, the Yemenis then known as the Hinawi, the Nizar as the Ghafiri. Omani villages are still partitioned into different sections matching these ancient tribal divisions. In fact, some tribesmen have been known to refuse government arbitration if the arbitrator comes from a tribe long hostile to their own.

While the tribes in the interior quarreled, Oman’s coastal cities flourished. Suhar, first built up under Persian rule, rose to such prominence during the 10th century that the geographer Istakhri proclaimed that “it is not possible to find on the shore of the Persian Sea nor in all the land of Islam a city more rich in fine buildings and foreign wares.” Here Arab, African, and Indian merchants financed trading ventures throughout the western Indian Ocean and as far afield as China. Qalhat, with a more southerly location that enabled it to profit from Egyptian trade, eclipsed Suhar in the 13th century. Then Qalhat itself was eclipsed by Muscat with the arrival of the empire-building Portuguese at the dawn of the 16th century.

*** The Portuguese Interval

On his way to Qalhat in 1507, Portuguese admiral Affonso d’Albuquerque distinguished himself by destroying every Arab ship he encountered. The citizens of Qalhat escaped unharmed, but Muscat, whose rulers refused to accept Portuguese sovereignty, was sacked and burned; those inhabitants who resisted had their ears and noses cut off. The Portuguese established a garrison and a trading post. Despite their initial harshness, they adopted a largely laissez-faire attitude toward Oman during their 140 years of rule, and were content to control the country’s coastal commerce. Aside from building the two stone fortresses of Merani and Jalali that guard Muscat’s harbor, the Portuguese left almost no lasting impression.{2}

Their rule, however, did inspire Oman’s tribes to set aside then-differences and elect a new imam, Nasir bin Murshid al-Ya’aribi, in 1624. For almost 25 years, Nasir sought to drive the Portuguese from Oman. Only in 1650 was his successor able to dislodge them from Muscat, after a bloody struggle that, in the words of historian ibn Ruzaik, saw slain Portuguese soldiers scattered “prostrate like the trunks of uprooted date trees.” The Portuguese never returned.

The Ya’aribah imamate (1624–1749) is regarded by Omani historians as the restoration of the medieval ideal of the kingdom of God on earth. It was a time of wealth and stability for Oman as slaves, gold, ivory, hides, coffee, spices, pearls, copper, rice, dates, fish, and horses all flowed through Muscat. Armed with modem cannon, the vessels of the Ya’aribah fleet—often Indian-built copies of European warships—collected a tax from all seaborne traffic in the Gulf and extended the imamate’s sway from Bahrain to the Swahili coast of East Africa. Wealth from this maritime empire went into a rash of building projects—the round fort at Nizwa, the elaborately carved and painted palace at Jabrin, and restoration of the falaj system.

[[e-o-essays-on-the-future-of-oman-in-the-wilson-qua-3.png][Trade brought prosperity to coastal Oman during the Middle Ages. One of the earliest

exports: frankincense from Dhufar, valued throughout the Middle East and Asia as a medicine and perfume.]]

Once again, however, the old medieval pattern reasserted itself. Ibadi religious leaders criticized the hereditary, increasingly cosmopolitan and wealthy Ya’aribah regime. Disagreements sparked a 20-year tribal war, with the Persians intervening, hoping to take over Muscat’s trade.

Only in 1749 was Ahmad bin Sa’id Al Bu Sa’id, progenitor of today’s ruling Al Bu Sa’id dynasty, able to unite the country’s warring tribes and expel the Persians. (Ahmad effectively ended the threat by slaughtering Persian emissaries during a banquet celebrating a peace treaty.) The focus of Omani history shifted from the interior to Muscat. Ahmad bin Sa’id Al Bu Sa’id’s descendants, temporarily losing control of the interior, relinquished the title of imam, but they consolidated Muscat as the premier port in the Persian Gulf.

“There are at present such immense quantities of goods in this town,” wrote Abraham Parsons of the English Levant Company in 1755, “that... there are not warehouses to contain half of them.” The hinterland tribes, meanwhile, were left to their own devices and suffered a series of incursions from Saudi Arabia.

This cycle of Omani history might have continued had not

— events in Europe dictated otherwise. The struggle between Great Britain and Napoleon’s France spilled across the Mediterranean to Egypt, which was invaded by French forces in 1798. Soon the western Indian Ocean became a war zone, as French and British ships did battle in numerous engagements. With its strategic location and good harbor, noted historian J. B. Kelly, Muscat itself “was admirably suited to serve Bonaparte as a rendezvous or staging point, should he decide to move upon India.” Indeed, Muscat already had ties to the French on the island of Mauritius, an important market for the slave trade. Alarmed, the British dispatched diplomats to Muscat in 1798 to conclude an agreement with Sultan bin Ahmad. He gladly pledged his

friendship to the British, especially after they promised to send — him a physician and increased the amount of salt that his ships could sell to the British East India Company. The French were kept out.

*** Off to Zanzibar

Sultan died from a musket wound incurred in a fight against pirates in 1804. After a two-year struggle, Sa’id bin Sultan (Sultan’s son) came to power by murdering his uncle. To his biographer ibn Ruzaik, Sa’id was “the happiest of rulers, who attained quiet prosperity and perennial glory... conquered with the sword hitherto unknown countries, and made a straight road over the dissevered necks of the rebellious.” In reality, Muscat declined during Sa’id’s rule, not least because his attempts to use the British to further Omani ends generally backfired.

Playing on British concern with piracy in the Gulf, Sa’id sought London’s aid against his Arab rivals. However, a joint Muscati-British attack in 1819 eventually resulted in British recognition of Sa’id’s competitors in what is now the United Arab Emirates, thus precluding his hopes of defeating them. Sa’id’s close alliance with the British also incited French attacks on Muscati shipping. Finally, the British themselves exerted mounting pressure on Sa’id to abolish the lucrative slave trade.{3}

Muscat’s economic fortunes suffered. Arriving in 1829, British traveler J. S. Buckingham described the port as “meanly built, having no good edifices in it, except the residence [of Sa’id].” Sa’id turned his

ambitions increasingly to East Africa, where during the 17th century : the Ya’aribah imamate had helped Swahili rulers expel the Portuguese. By 1829, having conquered the Swahili coast (now Tanzania and Kenya), Sa’id had resolved to abandon Muscat in favor of Zanzibar. There, his clove plantations worked by the slaves whom he could no longer sell provided a handsome income, in a much more hospitable environment. Appointing a regent in Muscat, he put the port’s financial apparatus in the

hands of Indian agents and tried to buy the cooperation of powerful local rivals.

In his absence, however, the situation at home deteriorated. An American consul sent to Muscat during the 1840s stayed only six months, complaining to Washington that there was no trade. Sa’id’s death in 1856 marked the demise of Oman’s days as a maritime power. For that matter, trade throughout the Gulf and the Indian Ocean was changing. The advent of European steamships, carrying European manufactured goods, wiped out much local industry and . commerce or brought it under foreign control. The opening of the Suez Canal in 1869 hastened the process. By the beginning of the 20th century, even the cotton cloth used to make an Omani tribesman’s robes came from Lancastershire mills.

Sa’id’s death heightened British influence as the British government mediated the dispute among Sa’id’s sons over the succession. Under the 1861 Canning Award, Muscat and Zanzibar became independent sultanates; in compensation, Muscat was promised a substantial British-guaranteed subsidy from Zanzibar. But the British remained reluctant either to guarantee the survival of the Al Bu Sa’id regime or to assume direct control of Oman. When tribal forces led by a revived imamate succeeded in briefly taking over Muscat, the British did little but express worry over the possible abuse of British nationals and withhold payment of the Zanzibar subsidy.

*** Drifting into Isolation

Ever in need of cash, the sultans in Muscat depended on the British-controlled payments from Zanzibar to keep their governments solvent. By 1895, J. T. Bent, a British traveler, could assert that “unquestionably our own political agent may be said to be the ruler in Muscat.” When a sultan sought to free himself of British domination, as when Faysal flirted with the French in the 1890s, London took appropriate action. In 1899, Faysal was ordered to board a British gunboat in Muscat harbor and informed that if he did not promptly break an agreement giving a coaling station to the French, his palace would be bombarded. The agreement was cancelled. In 1912 Britain also forced the Muscat government to end its profitable arms trade with the

Persians and Afghans, granting in return a new subsidy that bound the sultans even more closely to the British.

Contributing to British dominance was the inability of Muscat's sultans to protect themselves against frequent tribal attacks. The clerics and tribal leaders of the interior, determined to restore an Ibadi imamate that better embodied the old religious values, launched a strong uprising in 1913. Worried that Muscat would fall, Britain sent a detachment of Indian Army troops to defend the port. Seven hundred well-entrenched infantrymen beat back an assault by 3,000 tribesmen in 1915. The two sides began negotiations, but it took an economic blockade of the interior by Muscat and the assassination of the imam before Sultan Taymur bin Faysal, represented in the talks by the British, and Imam Muhammad bin 'Abd Allah al-Khalili were able to reach an agreement. In the so-called Treaty of Sib (1920), sultan and imam each agreed not to interfere with the affairs of the other. If not strictly in a legal sense, Muscat and Oman became, in fact, separate countries.

During the next 35 years Oman and Muscat remained at peace. Sultan Taymur was a reluctant ruler who sought only to abdicate and retire in peace to India. The British would not allow him to do so until Taymur's son Sa'id had reached maturity. They pressured Taymur to modernize the Sultanate's finances, provide the rudiments of modem ministerial government, and establish a local defense force—the Muscat Levies—to replace Britain's Indian garrison.

[[e-o-essays-on-the-future-of-oman-in-the-wilson-qua-4.png][The Omani Council of State (1928), including Bertram Thomas, Sultan Taymur bin Faysal's finance minister. More intent on exploring than administering Oman, Thomas, known as the wazir (adviser), resigned in 1931.]]

In 1931 Tayrnur was permitted to abdicate in favor of his son Sa'id, who immediately adopted the policies that characterized his regime until its downfall in 1970: direct control over the various branches of government and an economic policy of rigid austerity [see box, facing page]. Oman drifted into isolation.

By the mid-1950s, however, a new variable had entered the political equation—the promise of oil wealth. The first concession in Muscati territories had been granted to the British D’Arcy Exploration Company in 1924, but Imam Muhammad bin ’Abd Allah al-Khalili had steadfastly refused to permit geologists access to the interior. Matters came to a head in 1954 when the imam died. Although no oil had yet been discovered, Sa’id authorized Petroleum Development Oman (PDO), the consortium then managed by Shell Oil, to occupy Jabal Fahud, far in the interior. The Muscat and Oman Field Force (the oil company’s own militia) went further and seized the town of ’Ibri, well within the imamate’s domain. With aid from Saudi Arabia, the new imam, Ghalib bin Ali al-Hina’i, counterattacked. But by December 1955, Nizwa, the imam’s capital, had fallen to the sultan’s forces. Ghalib resigned as imam and retired to his home in Bilad Sait. Oman was unified.

Sa’id was able to savor his new-found eminence as sultan of Muscat and Oman only briefly. In May 1957, the supporters of the imamate, with weapons and supplies provided by Saudi Arabia, attempted to restore Ghalib. The Oman Revolutionary Movement (ORM) easily ousted Sa’id’s garrisons from Nizwa and Bahia. Sa’id wrote to the British consul general requesting “the maximum military and air support which our friend Her Britannic Majesty’s Government can give.” In response, the British dispatched a company of Scottish Cameronians and provided Royal Air Force support, forcing the ORM rebels to take refuge on the Jabal al-Akhdar (Green Mountain). A sheer limestone massif, with a large plateau at 6,000 feet and peaks rising nearly twice as high, the Jabal al-Akhdar made an ideal haven for the imamate’s guerrillas.

*** Waiting for Oil

On the diplomatic front, a vigorous propaganda effort based in Cairo managed to get the “Oman Question” on the United Nations Assembly agenda in 1957. In July 1958 Sa’id again called for British help. Britain, under increasing criticism in the UN, agreed to step in, but only after the sultan promised to reform his medieval kingdom. It was all done in the old imperial

style. The Sultan’s Armed Forces were reorganized by British advisers and officers. Two squadrons of Britain’s elite Special Air Service, airlifted from Malaya, stormed the Jabal al-Akhdar in January 1959 and captured the imam’s headquarters. Ghalib and other leaders escaped, eventually to settle in Saudi

Arabia. Leaderless, the rebellion soon dissolved.

/ Sa’id considered his victory Pyrrhic at best. The oil explorations that had inspired the conflict had discovered no oil. He had gone into debt to finance the war and had been compelled by the British to begin what he considered to be a frivolous economic development program. Fed up, Sa’id retired to the isolation of Salalah, Dhufar’s chief city, never again to set foot in Muscat.

To most rural Omanis, the sultan’s difficulties mattered little. Their daily concerns did not extend beyond their virtually self-sufficient villages. Living in houses of sunbaked mud brick or burasti (palm fronds), drawing their water from the falaj, they subsisted on a diet of dates, limes, dried fish from the coast, or rice imported from India, supplemented occasionally by goat, mutton, and tinned fruit from Muscat. Contact with the outside world was minimal. There were no radios, TVs, newspapers—not even a postal system.

*** ‘A Little Trouble’

Affairs of state were the concern of tribal sheiks, who served as the intermediaries between the people and Sa’id bin Taymur’s walis (governors) in the larger towns. Justice, regulated by Muslim law, was administered by qadis, like the walis known more for their greed than their ethics. The sultan accepted their venality. As he saw it, “to do otherwise would require that I pay them a salary.” The rudiments of a Koranic education were provided to village boys by religious scholars, who might also dispense good-luck charms or apply hot irons to the sick.

Not surprisingly, Sa’id’s move to Salalah failed to eliminate his political problems. Prior to his accession, Dhufar had been only loosely bound to the rest of Oman. “The people,” commented Bertram Thomas, Sultan Taymur’s finance minister, “composed of warlike and rival tribes, have always found law and order irksome.” They were to find Sa’id’s rule irksome indeed. According to John Townsend, one of Sa’id’s former advisers, the sultan treated the Dhufaris as if he were “a harsh Victorian nanny, save that his punishments tended ultimately to be fatal.” The Dhufaris reacted by attacking oil company facilities and ambushing army patrols. By 1965, the rebels had formed themselves into the Dhufar Liberation Front (DLF). In April 1966, DLF agents infiltrated Sa’id’s bodyguard and attempted to assassinate him. They missed. Sa’id promptly telephoned a nearby army camp and told a British officer there that “we seem to be having a little trouble down at the Palace and I wonder if you would be so good as to come down.”

Marxist radicals dominated the DLF by 1968, turning a quasinationalist struggle against Al Bu Sa’id despotism into a leftist revolution. Following a familiar Third World script, the DLF became the

Popular Front for the Liberation of the Occupied Arabian Gulf (PFLOAG). Its adherents began to receive military training, AK-47 automatic rifles, and Katyushka rockets from the USSR, China, and Iraq. South Yemen, newly independent (1967) and a Soviet ally, provided bases and other facilities. Although PFLOAG did not attract — much of a following among the region’s Jibali tribesmen, by 1970 its guerrillas controlled Dhufar’s mountains and much of the coast.

The only good news for Sa’id was the discovery of oil at Fahud in 1964 and the beginning of exports in August 1967. With annual production near 100 million barrels, the Omanis now had enough money to launch a real development program. It came too late for Sa’id. For almost four decades, his guiding principle in financial matters was that Oman did without what Oman could not afford. Therefore, Oman did without almost everything. Even Sa’id’s isolation from his people was explained in financial terms; the gifts and banquets required of a proper Arab ruler would have been too great a

drain on the treasury. Hated by his subjects for his meanness and petty restrictions, Sa’id in turn despised the Omanis for their backwardness and opposition to his rule. When the money came in, Sa’id permitted work to begin on a few projects—a new hospital, a modem harbor, and an international airport—but progress was slow, too slow.

Opposition to Sa’id spread. In early 1970 a National Democratic Front for the Liberation of Oman and the Arab Gulf emerged, staging mortar attacks on Nizwa and Izki. Another group, the Arab Action : Party, was formed in Ru’us al-Jibal. It became apparent to pro-West-em critics of Sultan Sa’id that a change had to be made. The focus of their hopes was the 29-year-old crown prince, Qabus bin Sa’id.

[[e-o-essays-on-the-future-of-oman-in-the-wilson-qua-6.png][Omani troops taking a break during the Dhufar Rebellion (1963–75). Neighboring states like Abu Dhabi, whose army in 1979 was 85 percent Omani, often try to lure seasoned Omani soldiers with offers of higher wages.]]

Bom in November 1940 to Sa’id’s Dhufari wife, Qabus’s early — .... years were spent in Salalah. In 1958, like many another Arab prince, he was sent off to boarding school in England, and thence to the Royal Military Academy at Sandhurst. After a brief stint with the Cameronians in West Germany, training in municipal administration, and a world tour, he returned to Salalah in 1964. There, the future — sultan was kept under virtual house arrest, compelled to study Islamic law, and denied contact with all outsiders except a few of Sa’id’s trusted British advisers.

Worried that Oman would go the way of Marxist South Yemen, even some of the Britons began to conspire with Qabus. On July 23, 1970, a group of soldiers commanded by Buraik bin Hamud al-Ghafin, son of the governor of Dhufar, entered Sultan Sa’id’s apartment in the palace. After a brief gun battle (Buraik was shot in the stomach, Sa’id in the foot), the sultan was arrested.{4} On July 26, the new Sultan Qabus made his first national radio broadcast, informing his subjects—few of whom had radios—of the coup.

*** The Dhufar War

“When the post-coup tumult and shouting had died,” wrote Townsend, “and the heady euphoria of the old sultan’s departure had abated, it came to be realized that Oman had no government, no plans for the future, no people able to take office and make clear and firm decisions.”

Qabus’s uncle (and Sa’id’s brother) Tariq bin Taymur was called back from self-imposed exile in West Germany to serve as prime minister. But jealousy and distrust between the two men ultimately led to Tariq’s resignation. Qabus assumed full control. After 1971 Qabus’s government, while involved in a much greater range of activities than under Sultan Sa’id, exhibited many of the characteristics of the ancien regime. The new sultan relied heavily on expatriates, especially in military and economic affairs, and traditional Al Bu Sa’id family retainers. Furthermore, he remained isolated from his subjects, very much in the manner of the Al Bu Sa’id Sultanate.

But unlike his father, Qabus immediately tapped the country’s oil wealth for schools, hospitals, roads, electrification, and radio and color television service. He established ministries for labor, health, and education, among others. Unfortunately, as a 1974 World Bank report noted, “the development effort [was] unavoidably ad hoc and largely uncoordinated.” Before securing the sultan’s approval for their projects, ministers would rarely check to see if the necessary money was available. Newly rich, the country grew newly indebted. World Bank technical assistance and the establishment of a planning council helped to put Oman’s financial house in order by 1975.

These political and economic difficulties stemmed in part from Qabus’s priorities during his first five years—winning the Dhufar war. The conflict received little attention in the Western media. Not only were few journalists allowed in to cover the war, but events elsewhere in the Middle East—the 1973 Yom Kippur War, for example—proved more riveting. And with the pro-Western shah Mohammed Reza Pahlavi in control of Iran, the Gulf seemed

secure. Yet even the shah recognized the danger posed by the Dhufar uprising, dispatching a brigade of paratroopers to help out his ally in Oman. Qabus devoted almost all of his attention to the conflict, frequently visiting his British-led troops to cheer them on.

One of Qabus's first acts was to offer a general amnesty to all enemies of his father, particularly those in Dhufar. He began an ambitious hearts-and-minds campaign among the Jibali, building wells, roads, and schools. Between 1971 and 1975, Dhufar, with its population of about 50,000, received almost one-quarter of the funds spent on development. Surrendering guerrillas were retrained by the Special Air Service and turned into an irregular unit—the firqat. Meanwhile, the 10,000 men of the Sultan's Armed Forces, led by British contract officers, concentrated on cutting supply lines between the roughly 2,000 rebels and the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen. RAF Strikemaster ground support aircraft flew missions from the RAF bases at Salalah and the island of al-Masirah. In 1973–74, with the arrival of Jordanian engineers and the Iranian paratroopers, government forces went after the guerrillas in the mountains.

By 1975, Brigadier John Akehurst, commander of the sultan's Dhufar Brigade, could report that "Dhufar is now ready for civil development." At the National Day celebrations in 1976 Qabus announced to his nation and the world that Oman was reunited and at peace. Oman's new era could begin in earnest.

** 'A Tyranny of Indifference'

"The people shall not have what they want," Sultan Sa'id bin Taymur once said, "but what I think is good for them." Educated at a British school for princes in India, and speaking three foreign languages, Sa'id bin Taymur nonetheless kept his countrymen trapped in almost medieval ignorance and poverty for 38 years. He subjected them to what John Townsend, one of his former advisers, called "a tyranny of indifference."

Outside the Women's Hospital in Muscat, modem medicine was virtually unknown in Oman. As Sa'id put it, "If we build clinics, many more will

survive, but for what? To starve?” Public education consisted of three state-run primary schools. Sa’id’s reasoning: “I cannot afford to pay good teachers.” Religious conservatism led him to restrict public singing, smoking, and the carrying of dolls. He insisted that Omanis wishing to import cars, build stone houses, or travel across the land first secure his permission. That in itself was no easy matter, for only a handful of officials had a radio link to his palace in Salalah.

[[e-o-essays-on-the-future-of-oman-in-the-wilson-qua-5.png]]

Yet for all Sa’id’s austerity, most foreigners who met him agreed with Colonel David Smiley, commander of the Omani armed forces, who found him a man of “quiet dignity and almost irresistible charm.”

The sultan’s frugality is best explained by what happened to his father, Sultan Taymur bin Faysal. Sa’id had watched as his father went into hock to Hindu merchants. He saw that the British would repay his father’s loans, but only at a price. (“If the Sultan is in our debt,” said British Resident Percy Cox in 1916, “we are in a stronger position to guide Muscat affairs.”) Sa’id vowed that Oman, to retain its autonomy, would enjoy only what it could afford.

To Sa’id, penury was sound politics. Education was expensive—and risky. “That is why [the British] lost India,” observed Sa’id, “because [they] educated the people.” Surveying the Middle East, he noted that high expectations usually led to trouble. Citing the case of Egypt, where in 1952 young army officers led by Colonel Gamal Abdel Nasser toppled King Farouk I, Sa’id said to Colonel Smiley: “All revolutions in the Arab world are led by colonels. That is why I employ you. I am having no Arab colonels in my Army.”

Unfortunately for Sa’id, his faith in British officers was misplaced. After Oman began to export oil in 1967, Sa’id’s British advisers—worried about a growing insurgency in Dhufar—urged rapid economic reforms. But the sultan balked, little realizing that his refusal paved the way for British support of his son, Qabus, who ousted his father in July 1970.

[[e-o-essays-on-the-future-of-oman-in-the-wilson-qua-7.png]]

** A New Dawn?

by Mark N. Katz{5}

At the entrance to the Persian Gulf lies Oman’s Musandam Peninsula, a fissured mass of black rock. Deep fjords cut into the land, their sheer sides rising out of the water as high as 5,000 feet. Largely devoid of shrubs or trees, the peninsula’s interior consists of rows of wind-worn ridges, interrupted only by jagged peaks.

Sovereignty over the Musandam, barren as it may be, has made Oman a nation of paramount importance. On a clear day, the peninsula’s Shihuh tribesmen, herding goats near their stone huts, can gaze across the Strait of Hormuz and see the brown hills of Iran, two dozen miles away. Nautical charts of the strait show two 2.5-mile wide navigational channels, 30–50 fathoms deep, in Omani waters between Iran and the peninsula. Marking their approximate midway point are the two Quoins, islands named by European sailors after the wedges once used to elevate ships’ cannon.

In 1986, flying Liberian, Panamanian, or Japanese flags, roughly 15 to 20 tankers transited outward bound through the strait every day. Some of the VLCCs (very large crude carriers) are 1,000 feet long; each can carry as much as 1.8 million barrels of Gulf oil, or about 11 percent of U.S. average daily oil consumption in 1986. All told, about 14.5 percent of the world’s petroleum production (from Saudi Arabia, Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates, and other Gulf states) passed through the strait, supplying Japan with 55 percent of its oil and Western Europe with 25 percent.

Long a choke-point for Persian Gulf trade, the strait has preoccupied the West since the 1979 fall of the shah of Iran. The Ayatollah Khomeini now

controls the narrow passage’s northern shores. Worse, the border war between Iran and Iraq led, in 1986 alone, to more than 60 air attacks on vessels in the Gulf. Insurance rates for ships traveling above the 24th parallel have tripled since the outbreak of hostilities in 1980. Neither belligerent has yet tried to close the strait, but Iran’s President Ali Khamenei vowed in September 1985 that “not one drop of oil would be allowed to leave the other ports of the Gulf” if Iraqi bombing blocked Iranian oil exports.

To those European nations needing Mideast oil, Oman is one of the few bright spots in a region known for its turmoil. Unlike the neighboring People’s Democratic Republic of Yemen, where heavy fighting between rival Marxist groups broke out last January, Oman is not riven by factional political struggles. Thanks to a relatively tolerant religious climate, Omanis do not engage in the sectarian quarrels that can arise in Bahrain, Kuwait, and Saudi Arabia.

[[e-o-essays-on-the-future-of-oman-in-the-wilson-qua-8.jpg][The Strait of Hormuz, seen here with an Omani navy patrol boat in the foreground, and the main channel for shipping as it appears on charts. According to the U.S. Naval Inslitute, the strait is sufficiently wide and deep to make any attempt to block it by laying mines more of a “psychological threat” than a real one.]]

In many matters of foreign policy, Sultan Qabus bin Sa’id of Oman is the Gulfs odd man out. Although Qabus and his ministers consult with the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), Oman is not a member of OPEC, nor of the Organization of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries. Alone among the Gulfs leaders, Qabus endorsed the 1979 peace treaty between Israel and Egypt. He also signed a June 1980 agreement that gives the United States limited access to Omani military facilities. Impressed, the New York Times hailed Oman in March 1985 as “Washington’s most reliable ally in the Gulf.’’

That Oman would one day be a stable, staunch friend of the West seemed unlikely 18 years ago. In 1969, the 37th year of the reign of Sultan Qabus’s despotic father Sa’id bin Taymur, the country had to contend

with a Communist-backed rebellion in southern Dhufar province spurred, in part, by popular resentment over living conditions one step removed from the Middle Ages. Even in the capital of Muscat, running water and electricity were rare. Wearing eyeglasses and riding bicycles were among the many activities either forbidden or strictly controlled. With London’s backing, Qabus deposed his father on July 23, 1970. Then the young sultan and his British-trained army mopped up the Dhufar rebels. Proclaiming “a new dawn,” he began to build schools, roads, and hospitals where there once were none—an achievement that inspired the popular slogan, “Before Qabus, nothing.”

*** When ‘God’ Speaks

Even allowing for the ban on published criticism of the sultan, his popularity seems genuine enough. Most Omanis, especially those old enough to have lived under Sultan Sa’id, appreciate what Qabus has done. They regard him with almost filial devotion. There is a Sultan Qabus University, a Sultan Qabus Mosque, and a Sultan Qabus Stadium. Yet Qabus has avoided the excesses of a formal cult of personality. Except during the annual National Day (November 18) celebrations, his face is not exalted, Mao-style, on billboards and buildings. The sultan is seen rarely in public, preferring, like his father, to stay at his palace in Salalah, capital of Dhufar province.

A picture taken of Qabus shortly after he came to power shows a slight, almost bashful man with an unkempt beard, wearing a long white dishdasha. Today, even as he favors traditional garb—the dishdasha is compulsory for Omani cabinet ministers—Qabus, his beard neatly trimmed, is as likely to be seen in military uniform. He has gotten over his initial shyness. Foreign visitors are put at ease by his charm, his hospitality, and his excellent English—acquired during a four-year stay in England, including two years at the Royal Military Academy in Sandhurst. Indeed, with his spit-and-polish uniforms, his passion for military parades, his meticulous attention to protocol and ceremony, the sultan is no ordinary Gulf ruler. As he told an interviewer in 1972, “I hope that you are not forgetting that I am a military man and a Sandhurst graduate.”

The sultan is also an absolute monarch. For all Qabus's attention to his people's needs, observes John Townsend, a former British adviser to both Qabus and his father, "the prime objective of the Sultan, in political terms, can be expressed in one word: 'survival.'" Initially reliant on British counselors, he now stands as master in his own house, serving as head of state, prime minister, and minister of defense, finance, and foreign affairs. Advice comes from a State Consultative Council, but its 55 members, drawn largely from the ranks of cabinet undersecretaries, merchants, and backcountry tribal leaders, have no legislative powers.

[[e-o-essays-on-the-future-of-oman-in-the-wilson-qua-9.png][Qabus meeting with tribesmen in Dhufar. According to former adviser John Townsend, the sultan, although reclusive, is "a formidable orator.... In the public performance of his duties as Head of State, [he] has few peers."]]

No detail is too small to escape his attention. He has been known to tour Muscat at night, ordering the owners of dirty cars fined and rubbish removed. His own government employees refer to him as "God." When I asked why, several of them responded, "because he is all powerful but nowhere to be seen."

As Sultan Qabus has steered his country into the 20th century, it is oil that has provided the necessary propulsion. In 1984, the petroleum sector accounted for 95 percent of all export earnings and 90 percent of government revenues. Oman's daily production, as high as 600,000 barrels in 1986, is modest in comparison to that of its two neighbors Saudi Arabia (4.7 million) and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) (1.4 million). Even so, oil has enabled the country to more than quadruple its gross domestic product (GDP) since 1976. In 1984, GDP per capita stood at $6,600, slightly below that of the United Kingdom ($7,488), but much lower than that of Saudi Arabia ($13,250) and the UAE ($28,000).

This prosperity is evident as soon as one lands at Muscat's Sib International Airport. Buick sedans, Datsuns, motor scooters, and the occasional Mercedes taxi cruise the four-lane highway leading to the capital. Tower cranes loom over the steel and concrete skeletons of new offices and apartment blocks.

Overlooking the sea, the hillside homes in the wealthy suburb of Qurrn are worthy of southern California. Even the poorer quarters of Ruwi, greater Muscat's outlying commercial district, lack the grinding poverty one finds in, say, Cairo: Almost all the tiny, one- or two-room dwellings have air conditioners to ease the discomfort of 100-degree summer temperatures.

*** Of Toyotas and Televisions

Set in a crescent of rugged brown hills, Muscat has seen substantial urban renewal. Two 16th-century Portuguese forts still flank the city's waterfront, but many of the elaborate stone and wood townhouses built by well-to-do merchants were tom down in 1974 to make room for Qabus's new downtown palace. Of the half-dozen or so that survive, one has been turned into a museum, another is used as the U.S. embassy. Most modem business enterprises have moved outside the old city walls, within which no building is higher than six stories. The capital's narrow, winding streets have been widened. Part of its old suq (market) is now a parking lot. Those who crave its former bustle can go to the suq in the adjoining port of Matrah, where the air is thick with the shouts of vendors and the smell of fish and dates. Tucked into narrow, crowded alleys, tiny shops and stalls sell gold jewelry, silver coffee pots, and khanjars (ceremonial daggers worn by Omani men), as well as stereos, television sets, and bootlegged video cassettes.

Muscat and its satellites of Matrah and Ruwi (total pop. 220,000) boast a higher standard of living than do the towns and villages of the interior, home to roughly half of Oman's one million inhabitants. But the hinterland gets its share of consumer goods. When I arrived in Nizwa (pop. 15,000), some 100 miles southwest of Muscat, tribesmen were selfing goats in the marketplace adjacent to the town's 17th-century fort. Parked nearby under placards advertising Pepsi-Cola was a row of Toyota pickup trucks and Land Rovers.

More important, however, than cars, trucks, televisions, and stereos has been the steady improvement in the average Omani's health and education. In fact, after almost four decades of imposed penury and isolation under

Sultan Sa’id, Omanis can reel off “progress” statistics not matched by many countries. In 1970, the entire country had three schools with 909 male students (often handpicked by the sultan himself), one hospital with 12 beds, and 10 kilometers of paved roads. Now some 200,000 students (79,300 of them female) attend 590 schools, hospital beds number 2,587, and the road network stretches 3,308 kilometers. In the absence of radios, televisions, or newspapers, most Omanis heard of Qabus’s accession in 1970 by royal decrees posted on city walls or by word of mouth. Today, they can tune in to a color TV channel or two radio stations, or read six Arabic and three English-language papers.

[[e-o-essays-on-the-future-of-oman-in-the-wilson-qua-10.png][Sultan Qabus’s downtown palace now takes up much of old Muscat’s waterfront, but the atmosphere of Matrah’s suq is unchanged. Fifteen years ago, Ruwi, seen here with the highway leading to Sib International Airport, boasted only a few modern buildings amid its mud brick huts.]]

As Ian Skeet, an oil executive in pre-1970 Oman, remarked after a 1983 return visit, “the Sultanate... is a different country set in the same surroundings.” My own two trips to Oman (December 1982 and February 1986) provided ample proof of progress. What I saw, however, also pointed to the problems a society can encounter when it tries to jump, in the span of a decade or two, from medievalism to modernity. While much has been made of Oman’s dramatic material transformation, much of its feudal framework remains intact.

To their credit, Qabus and his ministers have avoided many of the expensive mistakes made by Mexico, Venezuela, and other more advanced nations suddenly inundated by petrodollars. They have not tried to “buy” an industrial base overnight; nor have they relied overmuch on tomorrow’s oil revenues to secure today’s foreign loans. In 1980, Qabus began diverting 15 percent of annual gross petroleum revenues into a State General Reserve Fund—since used to cover annual budget deficits. Partly as a result, Oman enjoys an excellent reputation among international lenders.

*** Small Is Beautiful

Fiscal prudence is dictated by the limited size of Oman’s proven oil reserves, estimated at four billion barrels in 1986. Small by comparison with Kuwait’s 90 billion or the UAE’s 33 billion—and barring future discoveries—they will last another 20–25 years at current production levels. Thus, while the UAE can afford to build seven jet airports—including two within 10 miles of one another—Oman cannot. “We don’t really go... for prestige projects,” said Minister of Information Abdul Aziz bin Mohammed al-Rowas in 1985. “We don’t believe in them and we can’t afford them.”

Oman’s largest nonpetroleum venture is a $213 million copper mine and smelter operated by the Oman Mining Company in Suhar. Other enterprises include the Oman and Raysut Cement Companies and the Rusail Industrial Estate, where small factories assemble water pumps, air conditioners, car batteries, furniture, and other items once imported from abroad. In 1984, manufacturing represented just three percent of Oman’s GDP—insignificant, except that it had risen 41 percent since 1983. Construction and wholesale and retail trade have also helped to whittle down oil’s share of the GDP from 61 percent in 1980 to 46 percent in 1984.

The oil industry provides cash but not many jobs for Omanis. The government (60 percent), Royal Dutch Shell (34 percent), Compagnie Fran^aise des Petroles (four percent), and Partex (two percent) make up the Petroleum Development Oman consortium. It accounts for more than 95 percent of Oman’s oil production but employed fewer than 5,000 Omanis in 1982.

Most Omanis, like their forebears, are fishermen and farmers. With its interior and fertile Batinah coastal plain suited to dates, limes, alfalfa, wheat, and sorghum, and its waters rich in kingfish, tuna, skipjacks, and sardines, Oman is one of the few Gulf states with the potential to both feed itself and export food. (After oil, Oman’s most valuable exports are frozen fish, copper, and limes.) The Bank for Agriculture and Fisheries (opened in 1981) has provided loans for seeds and fertilizer, subsidized the construction of jetties and harbors, and purchased outboard motors and new boats.

Yet despite this official encouragement, more and more Omanis are abandoning their fields and wooden dhows for the (relatively) bright lights of the capital. A 1977 study of the agricultural community of ’Ibri showed that three-quarters of the male population between the ages of 14 and 40 had left; nearly half of these men took low-ranking posts in the security forces, a quarter were unemployed, and almost all the rest worked as occasional laborers or messengers in government offices. Self-sustaining in food a generation ago, Oman had to import an estimated 90 percent of its wheat and 40 percent of its vegetables and meat in 1980.

Ironically, improvements in farming technology may be hastening the rural exodus. Crucial to rural society has been the intricate falaj irrigation network; villagers share responsibility for coping with seasonal variations in the water supply, maintaining canals, and distributing individual “shares” of water. The introduction of mechanical pumps is now lowering Oman’s water table; the pumps suck up water faster than it can be replaced. And because only the wealthier farmers can afford pumps, the gap between rich and poor is growing.

*** Investments in Switzerland

Further loosening local bonds has been the beneficence of the Qabus regime. New schools and health clinics have displaced such institutions as the waqf, a system of religiously organized charities that provided funds for the upkeep of mosques, education, the poor, and orphans. “The growth of a welfare state...,” writes Oxford geographer John Wilkinson, “administered by a remote central government, is replacing self-help and... communal responsibility.”

It is also replacing tribal authority. Where rural Omanis once relied on their sheiks for help or protection, they increasingly turn to the sultan’s wait (governor) or to local municipal councils.{6} As for the sheiks themselves, Qabus has sought to pry them from their followers with money and patronage. “These days,” said a civil servant quoted in the Economist, “the tribal leader does not want to know about the

problem of one bedu who has lost his camel. He is more interested in his investments in Switzerland or his job in Muscat.”

These changes, social and otherwise, have been felt most strongly in Oman’s interior, historically more isolated and conservative than the coastal regions. Not surprisingly, some customs and traditions have been easier to alter than others. Bedouin women, for example, may be grateful that doctors now check them for trachoma, an eye disease striking 95 percent of the population as late as 1975. But some remain reluctant to remove the burqa (face mask) for the examination. For its part, the government has been prudent in such matters. “It is a mistaken policy to impose things,” noted Qabus in 1985. “They must be allowed to evolve quite normally.”

In general, however, the inhabitants of both the interior and the coast have taken to modernity with better grace than some of their counterparts elsewhere in the Gulf. Paolo Costa, an Italian anthropologist who has spent more than 20 years in the Middle East, put it thus: “If I wanted to take a picture of an Iraqi and his camel, the Iraqi would want to smash the camera because I was an imperialist looking down on him for being primitive. In Oman... the man will tell you, ‘Yes, fine-looking beast isn’t it?’ The Omanis are utterly secure in their sense of who they are.”

Social mores tend to be more relaxed in Oman than in Saudi Arabia or Kuwait, where, for example, the sale or consumption of liquor is completely forbidden. But in Oman, thirsty foreigners can go to bars in the Al-Bustan Palace, the Muscat Intercontinental, or other hotels. Omani women also enjoy much greater freedom, shopping at the suq in Matrah, Nizwa, or ’Ibri without veils and wearing brightly colored shawls. Some work as secretaries, teachers, factory hands, even policewomen.

*** The U.K. Connection

Omani women enjoy unusual opportunities in part because their country faces a chronic labor shortage. The population is growing at an annual

average rate of three percent, and the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor now runs 10 vocational training centers. But Oman is still short of native mechanics, engineers, electricians, doctors, and teachers. From 1981 to 1985, as the economy grew, the number of foreigners employed in Oman rose by 64 percent. Egyptian and Jordanian teachers, Sri Lankan maids, Filipino nurses, Pakistani merchants, and Indian doctors and bureaucrats made up most of the 270,000 foreign workers who, in 1985, filled about two-thirds of all private sector jobs and one-third of those in the public sector.

If Omanis do not resent the presence of so many foreigners, it is because they are seen as necessary, or because they do the undesirable chores. But the presence of expatriate senior advisers, mostly British, in key ministries is another matter. Educated Omanis are anxious for these “expats,” as the elite foreign group is known, to move on, and leave the directing of the country to its native sons.

The British presence has diminished since the early 1970s. Once-powerful royal counselors have gone home. But the British and Omanis have not ended what British ambassador Duncan Slater called in 1985 their “broad, deep relationship.” Almost 11,000 Britishers work in Oman as engineers, architects, bankers, businessmen, or consultants. British officers serve as chief of the Defense Staff, commander of the air force, and commander of the navy.{7} (Only in 1984 was an Omani appointed commander of the army.) Some 1,000 seconded and contract British officers are in the armed forces, and their countrymen are prominent in the intelligence services.

*** Business As Politics

The British influence is felt in less formal ways as well. Those Omanis rich enough to do so spend their vacations in London, where many own second homes. Although more Omani students now go to the United States for university training, a degree from Cambridge or Oxford commands greater respect. And if anyone hopes that, in Oman, there’ll always be an England, it is Qabus himself. A dedicated Anglophile, he has flown in the London Symphony Orchestra for National Day, and played host to the Prince of Wales and his wife last November. He owns a country house in Berkshire. According

to the London Financial Times, his palaces in Salalah and al-Sib are stocked with pieces of Crown Derby china on side tables and volumes of Wilde, Dickens, and Fielding in bookcases. He likes to give his British friends a helping hand. Reportedly at Qabus's insistence, a British company, Airworks Limited, got half of a $50 million defense contract slated to go to the Vinnell Corporation, a U.S. firm.

In Oman, "conflict of interest," as American reformers know it, is an alien concept.{8} Unlike Saudi Arabia, where political power is concentrated among members of the ruling Saud family, in Oman only five of 23 members of the cabinet belong to Qabus's Al bu Sa'id dynasty. Most ministers are busmessmen first and public servants second. The most talented are by no means the most powerful. As Roger Matthews, Middle East editor of the Financial Times, has noted, the "power wielded by an individual minister... relate[s] to his rapport with Sultan Qabus, rather than to the weight of argument he can marshal in cabinet."

Some ministers have not hesitated to turn the sultan's absolute power to their own profit. In 1974, for example, the minister of communications requested a "minute" of the sultan after a ministerial meeting. Without a formal, detailed presentation, he convinced Qabus to grant permission for a $57 million desalinization and electricity facility (which would also water the gardens in the sultan's new palace). According to John Townsend, the final bill for the plant— including, of course, the minister's commission—came to $300 million. Since 1981, the State Consultative Council has helped to curb such extravagances. For his part, Qabus has warned his ministers that "your business must not interfere with your service to your government and your people." But the sultan devotes more attention to military matters than to financial affairs, and he seems to have abandoned a 1982 attempt to draft a law regulating cabinet officials' participation in private ventures.

[[e-o-essays-on-the-future-of-oman-in-the-wilson-qua-11.png][The best in the Gulf: Omani camels are highly regarded. So is Omani crude, low in sulfur and wax but expensive to extract.]]

Qabus has spoken often of “the happy day... when more people will take responsibilities from my shoulders.” In 1979, he told a Time correspondent, “I’d like to see us create a democracy for Oman, and I sincerely hope that day is not too far distant.” Almost eight years later, he still shows little eagerness to yield real power, or to make his government more democratic. Unlike his counterparts in Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, Qabus does not hold a regular majlis, an informal conference in which ordinary citizens can present petitions and air their grievances. Instead, Omanis must wait for the two or three times a year when Qabus sets off in a caravan to tour the land and meet with his subjects.

Some educated Omanis worry about Qabus’s reliance on one-man rule. Most Omanis, however, seem to care more about whether the sultan will produce an heir—and thus continuity and stability— than about questions of participatory democracy. (His 1976 marriage to his uncle Tariq bin Taymur’s daughter ended without child.) Qabus’s autocratic reign is largely benevolent: There is no significant political opposition, underground or otherwise; Amnesty International knows of no political prisoners. If Qabus can continue to deliver economic gains to his subjects, he will likely encounter only occasional grumbling about his policies.

*** Empty Beaches

Thus, Oman’s petrodollars have buttressed Oman’s political stability. But what oil giveth it can just as easily take away: The global oil glut dropped the price of Omani crude from $27.35 per barrel in January 1986 to $8.20 per barrel seven months later. Not bound by OPEC’s policies, Oman compensated by pumping more oil. Even so, oil revenues for 1986 will probably be half those of 1985. Qabus has cut government spending by 10 percent across the board and devalued the riyal against the dollar by the same amount. Projects called for under the third Five Year Plan (1986–90) have been canceled or delayed. Said Ahmad Makki, undersecretary of commerce and industry: “It is hard to plan what to spend when you don’t know what your revenues will be.”

Added to this uncertainty are the vicissitudes of foreign policy. True, Qabus does not have to worry overmuch about the remaining rebels in Dhufar, now no more than a handful. The rebels no longer receive support from the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen, with whom Oman exchanged nonresident ambassadors in 1985. But Oman occupies a peculiar perch in Middle East politics. Qabus is seen as an outsider by the sheiks and princes of the upper Gulf. The sultan's closest ties are to King Hussein of Jordan and Egypt's Hosni Mubarak. Unlike his fellow Arabs, he is more likely to speak of the "Soviet threat" than of the "Palestinian question," and he makes no secret of his pro-Western sentiments, as witness his current close relations with the United States [see box, p. 73].

Aware that some Arabs criticized Oman as a "client state" of the West, Qabus opened diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union in September 1985—a move designed, as he remarked, to "keep people on their toes." He also believes that his control over internal matters stems to some degree from his ability to limit Oman's exposure to the outside world. Foreign newspapers, magazines, video tapes and the like are scrutinized carefully, and some are occasionally banned. Most visitors, whether Arab or Western, must obtain a No Objection Certificate, and despite the obvious attractions of Oman's pristine seashore and rugged mountains, tourism is next to nonexistent. "Our people," observed Minister of Information Abdul Aziz al-Rowas in April 1986, "are not ready for bare-breasted [European] women on the beaches."

Perhaps so, but there are signs that official xenophobia may be getting out of hand. In February 1986, a royal decree went into effect banning all marriages between Omanis and foreigners (except citizens of other Gulf countries). The minister of justice invoked the "many social problems" that would result from children being raised under foreign influences. But to Omanis long used to marrying Muslim women from Pakistan, Baluchistan, and India, the ruling came as a shock, its prohibitions reminiscent of the bad old days of Sultan Sa'id bin Taymur.

In 1972, Qabus said of his father: "He didn't believe in change. His thinking went back to an age which is not this present age. So he had to fall from power, and this is what happened." Much has changed in Oman since 1970. Yet as historian John Peterson argues, "the post-1970 era should not be

viewed... as the abrupt departure from the past that slogans such as ‘new dawn’ would have it.”

The Sultanate survives as one of the world’s remaining absolute monarchies—akin to those in Saudi Arabia, Brunei, and Nepal. If anything, it is stronger than in times past. The notion of a benevolent autocracy may affront many Westerners. However, for a variety of cultural and historical reasons, the Arab Middle East is not about to embrace the tenets of, say, Swedish democracy. Of the six nations belonging to the Gulf Cooperation Council, only Kuwait has an elected body (the National Assembly)—and even that was suspended last July by Emir Jabir al-Sabah. But thanks largely to Qabus’s stewardship, Oman has avoided the brutality, violence, and poverty that plague other Middle East nations variously inspired by Marxism, Arab socialism, or Islamic fundamentalism. In that respect, the years since 1970 represent an unqualified success story.

** The United States and Oman

Few Arab nations boast such long-standing ties to the United States as Oman. After Sa’id bin Sultan signed a Treaty of Amity and Commerce in 1833, Oman became the second Arab country (Morocco was the first, in 1787) to establish diplomatic relations with the young Republic. Seven years later, Sa’id sent his 20-gun corvette Sultana to New York, bearing the first Arab envoy to the United States and gifts—including two stud horses and a gold-mounted sword—for President Martin Van Buren.

Despite the fact that unruly New Yorkers delighted in pulling the beards of the Sultana’s crewmen, relations between the two countries got off to a cordial start. But only with the accession of Sultan Qabus bin Sa’id did Oman and the United States become close allies as well. In April 1980, for example, Oman served as a staging point for the ill-fated attempt to rescue the American hostages held in Iran.

Qabus sees the United States as a valuable ally against Soviet expansionism. To the Pentagon, Oman is a valuable logistical link for the forces of its Central

Command, responsible for any future operations in the Persian Gulf. In June 1980, after being rebuffed by Egypt and Saudi Arabia, the Carter administration secured Qabus's approval of a treaty that grants the United States access to Omani military facilities, as well as permission to pre-position munitions and other supplies. In return, Washington promised to upgrade four Omani bases at Khasab on the Musandam Peninsula, al-Sib near Muscat, Thamarit in the interior, and the island of al-Masirah.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers completed its work—valued at $300 million—in 1985. Most of it was done at al-Masirah, built up by the British Royal Air Force during the 1930s and used as a training base during World War II. Its airstrip now has 12,000-foot runways—long enough for B-52 bombers—and storage tanks that hold six million gallons of jet fuel. A refueling stop for ships of the U.S. Sixth and Seventh fleets, the island sometimes serves as a base for antisubmarine reconnaissance flights by the U.S. Navy's P-3 Orions.

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Qabus knows the 1980 treaty does not please some of his Arab brethren (notably Kuwait). He has stressed that U.S. forces can be introduced only "at the request of the majority of the Gulf Cooperation Council states in case of a direct threat which they cannot repulse with their own forces." But the rules are sometimes bent. In 1984, U.S. commandos visited Oman to monitor the hijacking of a Kuwaiti airliner—an episode the Omanis officially deny.

Still, Washington has been careful to act with discretion. Mindful of the hostility engendered by a large U.S. presence in pre-revolutionary Iran, the United States maintains only a small military mission in Muscat. And while Qabus has said that he will not renew the current agreement (which runs until 1990), he seems relatively happy with the way things now stand. Indeed, in 1985 Minister of Information Abdul Aziz bin Mohammed al-Rowas told the Wall Street Journal that the U.S.-Omani accord could be "a model for a relationship between a superpower and a Third World nation."

** Background Books

“The people of Muscat seemed to me to be the cleanest, neatest, best-dressed, and most gentlemanly of all the Arabs that I had ever yet seen,” recalled J. S. Buckingham, a British traveler, after a visit in 1816.

Buckingham’s observations are preserved in historian J. B. Kelly’s Britain and the Persian Gulf (Oxford, 1968), a survey of British involvement in the region from 1795 to 1880. As Kelly makes clear, Britain’s ever-growing commercial and political interests in the Gulf ensured that Oman saw more than its share of British adventurers, diplomats, and journalists.

Men like James Welsted, an Indian Army officer in Oman in the early 19th century, and Samuel Miles, British political agent in Muscat (PAM) from 187276, brought British influence directly to bear on the Sultanate.

Welsted’s Travels in Arabia (J. Murray, 1838), a classic description of Oman in the early 1800s, traces its author’s route through the interior and along the coast. Miles, combining diplomacy with exploration, traveled widely as “PAM,” recording his impressions of Omani history and culture in Countries and Tribes of the Persian Gulf (1919; Cass, 1966).

Such personal recollections abound, as do elegant coffee-table books. One of the latter is Oman and Its Renaissance (Stacey International, 1977) by former British envoy Donald Hawley. Thoroughly researched, Hawley’s photographic survey of Oman depicts everything from the green palm gardens of the Batinah coastal plain to the six-hundred-foot dunes of the daunting Rub ’al-Khali desert. W. D. Peyton’s Old Oman (Stacey International, 1983), a compendium of portraits and

landscapes dated 1900–70, complements Hawley’s book with an earlier look at Oman.

Readers in search of good general histories of Oman, however, will have to look hard. Maverick U.S. oilman and amateur archaeologist Wendell Phillips provides one of the few in Oman: A History (Reynal, 1967). Highly colorful, somewhat idiosyncratic, Phillips’s account draws on Arab sources to describe such intervals in Omani history as the “pirate wars” at the turn of the 19th century. “The most troublesome pirate captain,” writes Phillips, “was one Rahma bin Jaubir, the very type of the ‘Barbary pirate’ of fiction: he had the capture of entire fleets to his credit, he gave no quarter... his body and face were a mass of disfiguring scars.”

Buccaneering aside, tribes have always supplied the structure for Omani economic and social life, and Tribes in Oman (Peninsular, 1982) by J. R. L. Carter describes them. Carter, a former tribal liaison officer for Petroleum Development Oman (PDO), outlines one fundamental division that persists in modern-day Oman: “the old rivalry between the town or hadr tribes, and the desert or bedu tribes.” The bedu like to tell a story about a townsman who, sleeping in the desert for the first time, thought that the stars were the Devil’s eyes and died of fright.

Carter finds that, though they may deny it, townsfolk and nomads rely on each other in a patron-client relationship.

Interdependence has not always meant peaceful coexistence, as the Dhufar Rebellion (1963–75) proved. In polyglot Dhufar, under the sultan’s direct administration only since 1880, “ferment had been a... pastime for hundreds of years,” writes Brigadier John Akehurst in We Won a War (Russell, 1982), his chronicle of the assimilation of the isolated southern province.

Akehurst recalls the firqat (Jibali tribesmen recruited to fight for the sultan) and their enthusiasm for their new cause. When shown battle

films, “chosen mainly for their visual effect,” the firqat would get so excited that they would fire their rifles at the screen.

Fortunately, northern Omanis no longer say, ‘If you see a snake and a Dhofari on your path, kill the Dhofari first,’” notes journalist Liesl Gratz in The Omanis: Sentinels of the Gulf (Longman, 1982). Gratz, in a rosy account of her own sojourns in contemporary Oman, argues that modernization has not yet destroyed the Omanis’ traditional patterns of life.

In Suhar the oil boom has changed the lives of the inhabitants only slowly. Anthropologist Unni Wikan’s Behind the Veil in Arabia (Johns Hopkins, 1982) pictures the enduring separation of the sexes: Suhar divides “into male and female spheres, roughly commensurate with the public and private domains.” Outside the home, Suhari women wear the burqa (face mask) as “a secluding and beautifying device,” to them no more a symbol of oppression than a blouse is to a Western woman.

Based on contacts with Suhari women inside their homes, Wikan’s book also discusses the xaniths, transsexual male prostitutes who style themselves women and are accepted as such by both sexes.

As toleration of the xaniths suggests, the old and the new may not be the polar opposites that many Westerners assume. J. E. Peterson argues in Oman in the Twentieth Century (Barnes & Noble, 1978) that even now “the new face of the country’s politics [is] firmly rooted in pre-1970 foundations.” Oil executives, for example, often rely on prominent sheiks, traditional arbiters, to act as intermediaries between the company and its tribal workers.

Even so, since Qabus’s coup, the Omani regime has been “trying very hard to put a modem image before its own people and the world,” comments John Townsend, former British adviser to Qabus, in Oman: The Making of a Modem State (St. Martin’s, 1977). Remarkably candid, the book

has been banned in Oman because of its mixed review of Qabus's government.

To Townsend, one of the more glaring failures of Qabus's regime is its failure to organize a system of water conservation and management. Qabus's top advisers apparently believe that it "is only a question of drilling [wells] in the right place"; as a result, "indiscriminate drilling and pumping" have caused irreversible damage to valuable ground water resources.

What happens to the "new" Oman depends as much on events outside its borders as decisions made within them. The Gulf states, argue the editors of The Persian Gulf States: A General Survey (Johns Hopkins, 1980), can be viewed as "a unit, with a common geography, history, economics, and culture." But political scientist David Long, in The Persian Gulf (Westview, rev. ed., 1978), thinks that differences predominate, with religious (Sunni versus Shi'a), ethnic (Persian versus Arab), and political (Marxist versus monarchist) schisms dividing the region.

Autocratic, multi-ethnic Oman will certainly feel the pull of other Gulf ideologies. But in Arabia, the Gulf and the West (Basic, 1980), J. B. Kelly emphasizes that the Omanis, looking to their long history, "have a tranquil pride which sets them apart." They are likely to defy easy prediction: "What the future holds for Oman is Oman's secret."

—Jennifer L. Howard

EDITOR'S NOTE: Jennifer L. Howard is copy editor of the Wilson Quarterly. Some of the titles in this essay were suggested by Calvin H Allen, Jr. For related titles, see WQ Background Books essays on Saudi Arabia (Winter '79) and Energy: 1945–1980 (Spring '81).

** A Future for Oman

The primary strength of the articles on Oman [*WQ*, New Year's '87] is their focus upon long-term developments. The question mark in Mark Katz's title, "A New Dawn?," implicitly recognizes the significance of incremental political and economic transformations. In a few years, 1970 may no longer be seen as the "great divide" between past and present in Oman.

The foreign-supported rebel movements of the 1950s and 1960s concretely indicate how Oman's political fortunes had already become intimately linked with those of neighboring states. Although the discovery of oil in commercial quantities in Oman itself dates only from 1964, economic developments instigated by oil production in neighboring states to Oman's north prompted massive legal and clandestine labor emigration by the late 1950s and early 1960s.

The wages of these emigrants sustained dependents in the supposedly "isolated" villages of the interior, facilitated formal schooling for the relatives of some emigrant workers, and intensified awareness of, and participation in, the wider currents of Arab nationalist politics. Sultan Sa'id's disregard, despite the best efforts of some of his advisers, of the cumulative significance of his subjects' changing political and economic expectations contributed significantly to his downfall in 1970.

Likewise, the consequences of mass education, one of the most important developments of the post-1970 "New Era," are only now beginning to be felt. Only in the last few years have large numbers of young Omanis completed university studies and begun to return to their country in large numbers. Their age precludes direct significant experience of the privations of the pre-1970 era.

The major challenge now facing the New Era will be its capacity to assimilate talented members of this new generation in responsible posts in

government, the military and other security services, and the private sphere, and to accommodate their desire to be heard in decision-making.

The challenge is not just one of providing sinecures, difficult enough in the present economic climate, but of flexibly responding to the changing, the intertwined, religious and political expectations of the late 20th century.

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{1} Calvin H. Allen, Jr., 36, is associate professor of history at the School of the Ozarks in Missouri. Born in Doylestown, Pennsylvania, he received a B.A. (1972) from the University of Pittsburgh, and an M.A. (1974) and a Ph.D. (1978) from the University of Washington. He is the author of Oman: Traditional Sultanate and Modem State (1986).

{2} One alleged *Omani* legacy to Portuguese culture was Muscatel wine, the product of grapes originally grown in Oman.

{3} In 1873, the sultan issued a decree forbidding Omanis to import or export slaves; the institution of slavery was not formally abolished until 1963. But as Robert Landen has noted, “often the relation between master and slave was purely a formality, the slave working where he pleased and returning to his master a portion of his earnings.”

{4} Taken by RAF plane to England, Sa’id died in exile in his suite at Claridge’s two years later.

{5} Mark N. Katz, 32, is a research associate at the Kennan Institute for Advanced Russian Studies. Born in Riverside, California, he received a B.A. in international relations (1976) from the University of California, Riverside, an M.A. in international relations (1978) from Johns Hopkins, and a Ph.D. in political science (1982) from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. He is the author of The Third World in Soviet Military Thought (1982) and Russia and Arabia (1986).

{6} While Oman is governed by Islamic law, the qadi, who arbitrates according to the book (i.e. the Koran), is losing much of his power to the Royal Omani Police, who are now responsible for handling everything from traffic violations to murders.

{7} The sultan’s troops are widely acknowledged as among the best in the Gulf. Well trained and well equipped, the 16,500-man army, 3,000-man air force, and 2,000-man navy were allotted 46 percent of the national budget in 1985.

{8} A case in point: In July 1986, the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission charged the Ashland Oil Company with paying one of Qabus’s closest advisers $29 million in bribes to secure an oil concession in 1980–83.

Letters to the Editor

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#author Charles R. Babcock & Dale F. Eickelman

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*** Harvard Unaware CIA Funded Book, Seminar

Agency Backed Professor’s Mideast Projects

By Charles R. Babcock

Washington Post Staff Writer

A Harvard University professor of Middle East studies broke university rules by accepting a $45,700 grant from the Central Intelligence Agency to sponsor a conference on Islam without informing the school first, according to a college official.

Safran, a native of Egypt, could not be reached for comment.

The conference on Islam fundamentalism is scheduled at Harvard next week and Safran will tell participants about the CIA funding, Spence's statement said. About 90 scholars from the United States and the Middle East are to attend.

CIA spokeswoman Kathy Pherson said the agency's contract for the conference was with Safran, not the university, so it was Safran's responsibility to comply with school rules to disclose the funding source.

Shattuck emphasized that the university was not concerned with the CIA funding itself but with the fact that Safran had not followed the school's rules about disclosing it promptly to school officials.

The Harvard Crimson student newspaper quoted Safran Wednesday as saying he did not share his CIA conference grant with the university, as Harvard's rules require, because he arranged it himself, rather than on behalf of the Center for Middle Eastern Studies.

In a statement earlier this week, Safran said, "I sought and obtained funds from the CIA as an 'independent contractor,' which would permit me to reimburse CMES for expenses incurred."

The Boston Globe reported yesterday that it had obtained a copy of Safran's book contract with the CIA, dated April 13, 1982. It noted that the book contains no reference to the fact that it was the product of CIA funds.

In the mid-1970s, congressional investigations disclosed that the CIA had arranged for publication of hundreds of books as part of a worldwide propaganda campaign. Pherson said she was not aware of Safran's reported book contract, adding, "I don't think that's what you would call secret funding."

*** Scholarly Ethics at Risk

Nadav Safran [“Harvard Unaware CIA Funded Book, Seminar” Oct. 12] claims that his failure to disclose a $107,430 CIA research contract did not harm the “credibility” of his recent Harvard University Press book on Saudi Arabia because the CIA made no prepublication changes. He also failed to disclose CIA sponsorship of a recent. Harvard Middle East Center conference on Islamic fundamentalism until compelled to do so.

Mr. Safran evades a major issue in scholarly ethics. The Middle East Studies Association, of which he is a fellow, adheres like many other professional academic associations to a policy of calling upon its members “to disclose fully in any written results” and to persons involved in such activities as conferences “all sources of support—other than personal.” Our resolution states “that the continued credibility and trust of the public in academic research on the Middle East rests upon an open and free disclosure of funding for such research.”

Failure to reveal sponsorship, especially intelligence funding, has a direct potential for destroying the delicate-and poorly understood ties of trust, understanding and mutual support upon which scholars of all nations rely to conduct, basic international research and discussion. Mr. Safran’s conduct, which resulted in the abrupt cancellation by several conference participants, will make it more difficult to secure the future participation of scholars from the Middle East in conferences with similar themes.

By providing such funds for research and conferences, the CIA, even if it places no restrictions upon the disclosure of its support, damages the national interest by compromising the potential for independent academic research- on sensitive political and social issues. The Harvard dean who stated that it is not a matter for Harvard that Mr. Safran chose not to disclose all aspects of funding in a Harvard University Press book similarly manifests a deplorable insensitivity to one of the basic tenets of academic research.

<right>

Dale F. Eickelman

Professor or Anthropology,

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New York

</right>

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#title Anthropologists as Spies & Responses

#subtitle Collaboration occurred in the past, and there’s no professional bar to it today.

#author David Price

#author David Price, Dale F. Eickelman,

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<[[https://www.thenation.com/article/world/anthropologists-spies/] [thenation.com/article/world/anthropologists-spies/]]>

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<[[https://anthrosource.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/an.2001.42.1.3.3][anthrosource.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/an.2001.42.1.3.3]]>

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** Anthropologists as Spies

[[d-p-david-price-anthropologists-as-spies-responses-1.jpg][Samuel Lothrop, anthropologist and wartime spy, worked for periods of his career at Harvard’s Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology.(Charles Krupa / AP Photo)]]

On December 20, 1919, under the heading “Scientists as Spies,” The Nation published a letter by Franz Boas, the father of academic anthropology in America. Boas charged that four American anthropologists, whom he did not name, had abused their professional research positions by conducting espionage in Central America during the First World War. Boas strongly condemned their actions, writing that they had “prostituted science by using it as a cover for their activities as spies.” Anthropologists spying for their country severely betrayed their science and damaged the credibility of all anthropological research, Boas wrote; a scientist who uses his research as a cover for political spying forfeits the right to be classified as a scientist.

The most significant reaction to this letter occurred ten days later at the annual meeting of the American Anthropological Association (AAA), when the association’s governing council voted to censure Boas, effectively removing him from the council and pressuring him to resign from the national research council. Three out of four of the accused spies (their names, we now know, were Samuel Lothrop, Sylvanus Morley and Herbert Spinden) voted for censure; the fourth (John Mason) did not. Later Mason wrote Boas an apologetic letter explaining that he’d spied out of a sense of patriotic duty.

A variety of extraneous factors contributed to Boas’s censure (chief among these being institutional rivalries, personal differences and possibly anti-Semitism). The AAA’s governing council was concerned less about the accuracy of his charges than about the possibility that publicizing them might endanger the ability of others to undertake fieldwork. It accused him of “abuse” of his professional position for political ends.

In 1919 American anthropology avoided facing the ethical questions Boas raised about anthropologists’ using their work as a cover for spying. And it has refused to face them ever since. The AAA’s current code of ethics contains no specific prohibitions concerning espionage or secretive research. Some of the same anthropologists who spied during World War I did so in the next war. During the early cold war Ruth Benedict and lesser-known colleagues worked for the RAND corporation and the Office of Naval Research. In the Vietnam War, anthropologists worked on projects with strategic military applications.

Until recently there was little investigation of either the veracity of Boas's accusation in 1919 or the ethical strength of his complaint. But FBI documents released to me under the Freedom of Information Act shed new light on both of these issues.

The FBI produced 280 pages of documents pertaining to one of the individuals Boas accused–the Harvard archeologist Samuel Lothrop. Lothrop's FBI file establishes that during World War I he indeed spied for Naval Intelligence, performing "highly commendable" work in the Caribbean until "his identity as an Agent of Naval Intelligence became known." What is more, World War II saw him back in harness, serving in the Special Intelligence Service (SIS), which J. Edgar Hoover created within the FBI to undertake and coordinate all intelligence activity in Central and South America. During the war the SIS stationed approximately 350 agents throughout South America, where they collected intelligence, subverted Axis networks and at times assisted in the interruption of the flow of raw materials from Axis sources. Lothrop was stationed in Lima, Peru, where he monitored imports, exports and political developments. To maintain his cover he pretended to undertake archeological investigations.

From his arrival in Lima in mid-December 1940, Lothrop was dogged by constant worries that his communications with Washington were being intercepted by British, Peruvian, Japanese or German intelligence operatives. By August 1941 he became concerned that his lack of significant archeological progress might lead to the discovery of his true work in Peru. Lothrop reported his fears of being detected to FBI headquarters: "As regards the archaeological cover for my work in Peru, it was based on the understanding that I was to be in the country six months or less. It is wearing thin and some day somebody is going to start asking why an archaeologist spends most of his time in towns asking questions. This won't happen as soon as it might because the Rockefeller grant for research in Peru makes me a contact man between the field workers and the government."

Lothrop was referring to the Rockefeller Foundation, which financed twenty archeologists who were excavating in Peru, Chile, Colombia, Mexico,

Venezuela and Central America. He also used his ties to a variety of academic and research institutions–including Harvard, the Peabody Museum, the Institute of Andean Research and the Carnegie Institute–as cover in Peru. Archeologist Gordon Willey, who worked on an Institute of Andean Research Project in Peru and had some contact with Lothrop at this time, recalled that "it was sort of widely known on the loose grapevine that Sam was carrying on some kind of espionage work, much of which seemed to be keeping his eye on German patrons of the Hotel Bolivar Bar."

In fact, Lothrop was considered a valuable agent who collected important information on Peruvian politics and leading public figures of a nature usually difficult to secure. An FBI evaluation reported that headquarters "occasionally receive[s] information of sufficient importance from Mr. Lothrop to transmit to the President." Lothrop's principal source was an assistant to the Peruvian minister of government and police. In the spring of 1944 this informant resigned his governmental position and began "working exclusively under the direction of Dr. Lothrop." In May 1944 the US Embassy reported that Lothrop's principal informant was fully aware of Lothrop's connection to the SIS and FBI. Lothrop's cover was compromised by four Peruvian investigators in the employ of his top informant. His informant had been heard bragging to the Peruvian police that he made more by working for the US Embassy than the police made working for the Peruvian government.

The FBI decided to test the reliability of Lothrop's key informant by assigning him to collect information on nonexistent events and individuals. The informant was given background information about a nonexistent upcoming anti-Jewish rally that he was to attend, including a list of specific individuals who would be present. Though the rally did not occur, the informant provided a full report on it. He also filed detailed reports on a nonexistent commemorative celebration of the bombing of Pearl Harbor held in a distant town, and on a fictitious German spy who supposedly had jumped ship in Peru.

Lothrop was instructed not to tell the informant that his duplicity had been detected; instead, he was to say he was out of funds to pay for informants. Lothrop refused to believe his informant was lying and sent a letter of

resignation to J. Edgar Hoover. His resignation was accepted and he returned to the United States to resume his academic duties at Harvard’s Peabody Museum and the Carnegie Institute.

What is now known about Lothrop’s long career of espionage suggests that the censure of Boas by the AAA in 1919 sent a clear message to him and others that espionage under cover of science in the service of the state is acceptable. In each of the wars and military actions that followed the First World War anthropologists confronted, or more often repressed, the very issues raised by Boas in his 1919 letter to The Nation.

While almost every prominent living US anthropologist (including Ruth Benedict, Gregory Bateson, Clyde Kluckhohn and Margaret Mead) contributed to the World War II war effort, they seldom did so under the false pretext of fieldwork, as Lothrop did. Without endorsing the wide variety of activities to which anthropological skills were applied in the service of the military, a fundamental ethical distinction can be made between those who (as Boas put it) “prostituted science by using it as a cover for their activities as spies” and those who did not. World War II did, however, stimulate frank, though muted, discussions of the propriety of anthropologists’ using their knowledge of those they studied in times of war, creating conditions in which, as anthropologist Laura Thompson put it, they became “technicians for hire to the highest bidder.” Although the racist tenets of Nazism were an affront to the anthropological view of the inherent equality of humankind, Boas (who died in 1942) would probably have condemned anthropologists who used science as a cover for espionage during World War II. Approximately half of America’s anthropologists contributed to the war effort, with dozens of prominent members of the profession working for the Office of Strategic Services (OSS), Army and Navy intelligence and the Office of War Information.

In the following decades there were numerous private and public interactions between anthropologists and the intelligence community. Some anthropologists applied their skills at the CIA after its inception in 1947 and may still be doing so today. For some of them this was a logical transition from their wartime espionage work with the OSS and other organizations; others regarded the CIA as an agency concerned with gathering information

to assist policy-makers rather than a secret branch of government that subverted foreign governments and waged clandestine war on the Soviet Union and its allies. Still other anthropologists unwittingly received research funding from CIA fronts like the Human Ecology Fund.

The American Anthropological Association also secretly collaborated with the CIA. In the early 1950s the AAA's executive board negotiated a secret agreement with the CIA under which agency personnel and computers were used to produce a cross-listed directory of AAA members, showing their geographical and linguistic areas of expertise along with summaries of research interests. Under this agreement the CIA kept copies of the database for its own purposes with no questions asked. And none were, if for no other reason than that the executive board had agreed to keep the arrangement a secret. What use the CIA made of this database is not known, but the relationship with the AAA was part of an established agency policy of making use of America's academic brain trust. Anthropologists' knowledge of the languages and cultures of the people inhabiting the regions of the Third World where the agency was waging its declared and undeclared wars would have been invaluable to the CIA. The extent to which this occurred is the focus of ongoing archival and FOIA research. When the CIA overthrew Jacobo Arbenz in Guatemala in 1954, an anthropologist reported, under a pseudonym, to the State Department's intelligence and research division on the political affiliations of the prisoners taken by the military in the coup.

During the Korean War linguists and ethnographers assisted America's involvement with little vocal conflict of conscience. Norwegian sociologist Johan Galtung's revelations in 1965 of Project Camelot, in which anthropologists were reported to be working on unclassified counterinsurgency programs in Latin America, ignited controversy in the AAA. During America's wars in Southeast Asia the AAA was thrown into a state of upheaval after documents purloined from the private office of UCLA anthropologist Michael Moerman revealed that several anthropologists had secretly used their ethnographic knowledge to assist the war effort.

As a result of inquiries made into these revelations, the 1971 annual meeting of the AAA became the scene of a tumultuous showdown after a fact-finding committee chaired by Margaret Mead maneuvered to create a report finding

no wrongdoing on the part of the accused anthropologists. An acrimonious debate resulted in the rejection of the Mead report by the voting members of the association. As historian Eric Wakin noted in his book Anthropology Goes to War, this “represented an organized body of younger anthropologists rejecting the values of its elders.” But the unresolved ethical issue of anthropologists spying during the First and Second World Wars provided a backdrop to the 1971 showdown. Almost two decades later, during the Gulf War, proposals by conservatives in the AAA that its members assist allied efforts against Iraq provoked only minor opposition.

Today most anthropologists are still loath to acknowledge, much less study, known connections between anthropology and the intelligence community. As with any controversial topic, it is not thought to be a good “career builder.” But more significant, there is a general perception that to rake over anthropology’s past links, witting and unwitting, with the intelligence community could reduce opportunities for US anthropologists to conduct fieldwork in foreign nations.

In the course of research in this area I have been told by other anthropologists in no uncertain terms that to raise such questions could endanger the lives of fieldworkers around the globe. This is not a point to be taken lightly, as many anthropologists work in remote settings controlled by hostile governmental or guerrilla forces. Suspicions that one is a US intelligence agent, whether valid or not, could have fatal consequences. As Boas prophetically wrote in his original complaint against Lothrop and his cohorts, “In consequence of their acts every nation will look with distrust upon the visiting foreign investigator who wants to do honest work, suspecting sinister designs. Such action has raised a new barrier against the development of international friendly cooperation.” But until US anthropology examines its past and sets rules forbidding both secret research and collaboration with intelligence agencies, these dangers will continue.

Over the past several decades the explicit condemnations of secretive research have been removed from the AAA’s code of ethics–the principles of professional responsibility (PPR). In 1971 the PPR specifically declared that “no secret research, no secret reports or debriefings of any kind should be agreed to or given” by members of the AAA. By 1990 the attenuation of

anthropological ethics had reached a point where anthropologists were merely “under no professional obligation to provide reports or debriefing of any kind to government officials or employees, unless they have individually and explicitly agreed to do so in the terms of employment.” These changes were largely accomplished in the 1984 revision of the PPR that Gerald Berreman characterized as reflecting the new “Reaganethics” of the association: In the prevailing climate of deregulation the responsibility for ethical review was shifted from the association to individual judgments. As anthropologist Laura Nader noted, these Reagan-era changes were primarily “moves to protect academic careers…downplaying anthropologists’ paramount responsibility to those they study.” The current PPR may be interpreted to mean that anthropologists don’t have to be spies unless they want to or have agreed to do so in a contract. A 1995 Commission to Review the AAA Statements on Ethics declared that the committee on ethics had neither the authority nor the resources to investigate or arbitrate complaints of ethical violations and would “no longer adjudicate claims of unethical behavior and focus its efforts and resources on an ethics education program.”

Members of the current ethics committee believe that even though the AAA explicitly removed language forbidding secretive research or spying, there are clauses in the current code that imply (rather than state) that such conduct should not be allowed–though without sanctions, this stricture is essentially meaningless. Archeologist Joe Watkins, chairman of the ethics committee, believes that if an anthropologist were caught spying today, “the AAA would not do anything to investigate the activity or to reprimand the individual, even if the individual had not been candid [about the true purpose of the research]. I’m not sure that there is anything the association would do as an association, but perhaps public awareness would work to keep such practitioners in line, like the Pueblo clowns’ work to control the societal miscreants.” Watkins is referring to Pueblo cultures’ use of clowns to ridicule miscreants. Although it is debatable whether anthropologist intelligence operatives would fear sanctions imposed by the AAA, it is incongruous to argue that they would fear public ridicule more. Enforcing a ban on covert research would be difficult, but to give up on even the possibility of investigating such wrongdoing sends the wrong message to the world and to the intelligence agencies bent on recruiting anthropologists.

Many factors have contributed to the AAA's retreat from statements condemning espionage and covert research. Key among these are the century-old difficulties inherent in keeping an intrinsically diverse group of scholars aligned under the framework of a single association. A combination of atavistic and market forces has driven apart members of a field once mythically united around the holistic integration of the findings of archeology and physical, cultural and linguistic anthropology. As some "applied anthropologists" move from classroom employment to working in governmental and industrial settings, statements condemning spying have made increasing numbers of practitioners uncomfortable–and this discomfort suggests much about the nature of some applied anthropological work. The activities encompassed under the heading of applied anthropology are extremely diverse, ranging from heartfelt and underpaid activist-based research for NGOs around the world to production of secret ethnographies and time-allocation studies of industrial and blue-collar workplaces for the private consumption of management.

As increasing numbers of anthropologists find employment in corporations, anthropological research becomes not a quest for scientific truth, as in the days of Boas, but a quest for secret or proprietary data for governmental or corporate sponsors. The AAA's current stance of inaction sends the dangerous message to the underdeveloped world that the world's largest anthropological organization will take no action against anthropologists whose fieldwork is a front for espionage. As the training of anthropology graduate students becomes increasingly dependent on programs like the 1991 National Security Education Program–with its required governmental-service payback stipulations–the issue takes on increased (though seldom discussed) importance.

It is unknown whether any members of the AAA are currently engaged in espionage, but unless the scientific community takes steps to denounce such activities using the clearest possible language and providing sanctions against those who do so, we can anticipate that such actions will continue with impunity during some future crisis or war.

Many in the American Anthropological Association are frustrated with its decision neither to explicitly prohibit nor to penalize secretive government

research. It is time for US anthropologists to examine the political consequences of their history and take a hard, thoughtful look at Boas’s complaint and the implications implicit in the association’s refusal to condemn secret research and to re-enact sanctions against anthropologists engaging in espionage.

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** The AAA and the CIA?

by David Price

Anthropology News, November 2000, pp. 13–14

See also: I Spy with my Science Eye Email

With little notice by anthropologists, there has been increasing documentation of the extent to which American intelligence agencies monitored and influenced the development of American social sciences throughout the Cold War. One of the ways these agencies accomplished this was through covert contact with professional associations — either as silent observers at professional meetings or as silent partners entering into secret agreements with individual members or official bodies within these associations.

A wide literature has developed that documents some of the interactions between American social science professional associations and intelligence agencies. Benjamin Harris documented the FBI's monitoring of the American Psychological Association and the Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues since the 1930s. In Stalking the Sociological Imagination (1999, Greenwood), Mike Keen used the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) to document the FBI's surveillance of prominent sociologists as well as the meetings of the American Sociological Association. Christopher Simpson likewise established that the "FBI and US military intelligence agents kept the American Sociological Society conventions under surveillance in an effort to smoke out radicals." Sigmund Diamond's book, Compromised Campus (1992), used FOIA to painstakingly declassify CIA and FBI documents revealing the extent to which post-war Area Studies centers were manipulated by the CIA and Pentagon.

While the history of the American Anthropological Association has been punctuated by inquiries into accusations that anthropologists have undertaken work for intelligence agencies, there has been little research into links between the AAA and these agencies. A variety of documents released to me under FOIA establish that the CIA and FBI have monitored activities within our Association. Further, documents from the Association's archives establish that, in the 1950s, the AAA entered into a series of covert relationships with the CIA. One of these relationships involved working to establish a liaison position between the Association and CIA. Another involved the Executive Board agreeing to secretly give the CIA a cross-indexed roster of the Association's membership detailing individuals' backgrounds and areas of expertise.

The chronology and historical background of these events are complicated and are described in another paper. Only a brief overview of the Association's documents relating to this episode appears below.

In February 1951, AAA Executive Secretary Frederick Johnson wrote the Executive Board that, due to numerous requests by various governmental agencies, he believed the Association needed to produce a detailed roster of its membership. Johnson — an unelected, non-voting, ex officio member of the board — recommended that the AAA work with the CIA on

this project. Throughout the Board’s decision process and during later negotiations with the CIA, Johnson maneuvered — even to the point of exceeding his ex officio role — to bring the CIA and their computers into this project.

AAA President Howells wrote Johnson (3/3/51), that “the CIA proposal is ideal,” and that under this proposal the CIA would keep a copy of the computerized roster data for their own uses. Howells indicated that if “a reasonable questionnaire, suitable to both parties, can be worked out, we will both get what we want, and except for the mailing [the CIA] will put the whole thing through from beginning to end, and the chances are we will get something that we want.”

Board members received ballots with two action items regarding this proposed relationship between the Association and the CIA. The first item proposed that Johnson be authorized to continue negotiations with the CIA regarding the production of a detailed roster of Association members; the second item requested authorization for Johnson to seek means for producing future rosters. The first ballot item is reproduced in full below because it clarifies the Executive Board’s awareness of the CIA’s involvement in compiling the roster, as well as the arrangements whereby CIA would keep a copy of the final product for their own uses:

<quote>

The Executive Secretary is empowered to continue negotiations with Central Intelligence Agency for the purpose of compiling a roster of Anthropological Personnel. The final agreement will be based on the idea that the Anthropological Association will sponsor the roster and the Agency will do the technical work connected with it. The [Central Intelligence] Agency will be allowed to keep one copy of the roster for its own use and it will deliver to the Association a duplicate copy the use of which will not be restricted. The final agreement between the Association and the Agency shall be such that the Association shall be liable only for mailing charges and such incidental expenses as it may be able to afford. The final agreement shall be approved by the Executive Board.

</quote>

On March 29, 1951 Johnson informed the Board that the “Proposal that Executive Secretary continue negotiations with the Central Intelligence Agency to arrange for compilation of a roster of Anthropologists” had passed, as did the second ballot item authorizing Johnson to negotiate the production of future rosters. Negotiations with anthropologists working at the CIA were undertaken and a plan of action was proposed.

Johnson wrote the Board that the CIA offered the best opportunity for the Association despite its insistence on secrecy (4/21/51). Johnson wrote that, “In searching for the ways and means of setting up a roster of Anthropologists I have a general proposal from [the] Central Intelligence Agency. This agency is reluctant to have its name connected with the proposal. It will do the work as generally and tentatively outlined below provided the Association will sponsor the project.” In keeping with CIA’s wishes, these arrangements were not made public.

The kinds of information to be collected by mailed questionnaires were negotiated in the summer and fall of 1951. The final questionnaire collected information on AAA members’ geographical, linguistic and cultural expertise as well as their military background. What became of the information collected for the roster is presently unclear. Association records for this period do not contain a copy of a completed roster, and public and private searches for copies of the final roster have thus far been fruitless. FBI records reveal that the questionnaire was sent to the AAA membership and further indicate that the FBI believed this roster to have “been initiated by some Governmental agency, such as CIA, for the express purpose of obtaining intelligence data.” The CIA has been uncooperative with my efforts to clarify the nature and extent of its contact with the AAA and its membership. At present we are left to wonder about the uses to which the CIA might have put such data as it engaged in anti-democratic and counterinsurgency activities in the decades that followed. I have hopes that some member of the Association reading this article knows the outcome of these negotiations with CIA, or what became of this roster.

All this raises troubling issues for our Association. These issues involve questions about a variety of only partially documented links between anthropologists and intelligence agencies, as well as fundamental issues concerning the ethics of allowing secrecy in research. While raising these issues complicates our relationships with those we study, not confronting these issues stands to potentially damage both the interests of anthropologists and those we study.

David Price is assistant professor of anthropology at St. Martin’s College in Lacey, Washington.

** Letter Responses

*** The CIA

The article by David Price (Nov 2000 AN p 13–14) on “The AAA and the CIA?” reminded me of two incidents I had with the CIA. One occurred in 1976, when a professor in the School of Education asked me if I would be interested in directing an archaeological survey along the Rio San Juan that divides Costa Rica from Panama. He said it was sponsored by AID and had an abundant budget for speedboats, room and board and salary. My wife, ever more vigilant than I about the machinations of our government, suggested I inquire if it really was a CIA project. That professor said “Yes.” It was archaeology masquerading as ethnography back in the days when we were try

ing hard to hold onto ownership of the Panama Canal. If the pressure by Panamanians got too great, the US government would “leak” my front study as clear evidence that the US was serious in developing a competitor to the

Panama Canal up the San Juan river and across the Rivas peninsula to the Pacific, so the Panamanians had better just behave themselves. What deviousness! Three separate levels of intrigue. That professor was surprised that I turned him down flatly, saying that I would and could never accept CIA funding for anything.

A few years earlier, while doing research at in El Salvador, I decided to visit Ixtepeque, the source of most Salvadoran obsidian. Ixtepeque was across the border in a somewhat isolated area of Guatemala. I drove as far as my little VW could go and, thank God, stopped at the little town of Agua Blanca to ask directions of the Mayor. He gave me all the directions I needed and then mentioned that two CIA agents, masquerading as archaeologists, had been discovered and killed by guerillas the year before. One body had been fished out of the Motagua River and the other had not been found. Local people were ready to kill any other self-declared archaeologists who wandered into the area, he explained. My disappointment in not being able to collect Ixtepeque obsidian shrank in comparison with my joy in being alive and having the pleasures of a family and a career. Need one wonder why I don’t appreciate CIA agents posing as archaeologists? Or why I will never take CIA money for any purpose?

Payson Sheets

U of Colorado, Boulder

*** Secret Research

David Price (The Nation, Nov 20) comments that the AAA in recent years has shown an increasingly “relaxed” attitude toward “secret” research. As a fellow of the AAA since 1964 and a former chair of the Ethics Committee of the Middle East Studies Association (and one of MESA’S former presidents), I would point out, that most “area” studies associations,

including MESA and its equivalent organizations for Latin America, Asia and Africa, have had clear policies on “secret” research since the 1980s.

MESA, for example, passed a resolution concerning research in 1982 that says, in part, that the association “calls upon its membership to disclose fully in any written results and also to all persons involved in its conduct (i.e., participants, contributors and subjects) all sources of support—other than personal—for that research.” The resolution continues, “In addition, it calls on organizations and institutions in Middle East Studies to make regular disclosure of the sources of funding for their programs, conferences and activities as they are announced and take place, and calls on its members to urge such disclosure.”

Other area studies associations have similar resolutions, and the MESA one was used as the basis in 1985 to expel Harvard University’s Center for Middle East Studies when it was determined that this center’s director, acting on behalf of the center, had violated this guideline—and Harvard U’s own internal guidelines—regarding research or activities involving sponsors or funders whose identity could not be disclosed.

The Harvard incident prompted national press coverage. It also prompted an internal investigation at Harvard, the results of which were made public on Dec 30,1985, together with an apology from the institution for being remiss in fulfilling its obligations to scholarship and the scholarly community.

Many, but not all, US-based anthropologists engaged in foreign area research belong to one of the area studies associations that call for greater transparency in declaring the sponsors for research and do so by enforceable resolutions.

The AAA might wish to consider adopting equivalent language.

Dale F Eickelman

Dartmouth C and the Institute for Advanced Study, Berlin

In Memoriam

#title Jacques Berque (1910–1995)

#author Dale F. Eickelman

#date December 1995

#source Middle East Studies Association Bulletin, Vol. 29, No. 2 (December 1995), pp. 149–150. <[[http://www.jstor.org/stable/23061986] [jstor.org/stable/23061986]]>

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#publisher Middle East Studies Association of North America (MESA)

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Jacques Berque, one of France’s most distinguished Islamic scholars, died at his family’s estate in Saint Julien-en-Bom, France, on June 22. Bom in Algeria, where his father, Augustin Berque, was Director of Native Affairs, Berque had a classical French training in the humanities, distinguishing himself in Francewide competitions, obtaining the agregation des lettres from the Sorbonne in 1932. [In 1994, he was elected an honorary fellow of MESA.]

After a brief stay in mainland France, Berque returned to Algeria, then considered an “integral” part of France, and lived for two years with a tribe in the Hodna region of Algeria in order to perfect his Arabic. In 1934, he entered the colonial service in Morocco as an officier des affaires indigenes and remained there until his 1953 resignation. His first scholarly publications date from his arrival in Morocco and include a brilliant sociological analysis of the Qarawiyin mosque-university in Fez and the concepts and practice of Islamic jurisprudence in a colonial setting. These early essays, originally published in key specialist journals, have since been

reprinted in various collections.[1] The scope and intellectual vitality of Berque’s writings are matched by few of his peers or successors, and his writings show familiarity with most of the major intellectual movements of the twentieth century.

Berque’s colonial career was marked by controversy almost from the outset. Together with Julien Couleau, Berque was responsible for a major plan for agrarian reform in Morocco which was submitted to Rabat’s Residence in 1944. It drew the wrath of the settler population and became moribund for all practical purposes when the settler lobby forced Berque’s transfer to a remote post in Morocco’s High Atlas mountains (1947–1953). The characteristic result of this administrative exile was a richly textured, Annalesstyte ethnography, Les structures sociales du Haut-Atlas.[2] Unlike most colonial officials, Berque was also a mentor to Moroccans, including Yahya Benslimane, a young agricultural student in the late 1940s who subsequently became director of the royal cabinet. In Morocco, as elsewhere in the Middle East and North Africa, Berque sustained close ties with successive generations of intellectuals and writers—in palaces and corridors of power, in the newly-formed universities and in the “opposition.”

After Berque’s resignation from France’s Protectorate administration of Morocco in 1953, he became a UNESCO expert in Egypt. The transition was again marked by an ethnography, Histoire sociale d’un village egyptien au XXeme siecle,[3] notable for its discussion of economic and educational/intellectual innovation, ritual in a time of rapid economic change and its caustic asides on the bureaucracies of international development.

Because he was equally at home with villagers and intellectuals, Berque’s UNESCO work and his subsequent appointment to the Sorbonne soon acquired an unmatched interpretive scope. Many of his key works were translated into English, including The Arabs: Their History and Future,[4] French North Africa: The Maghrib between Two World Wars,[5] Egypt: Imperialism and Revolution[6] and Cultural Expression in Arab Society Today.[7] His Al-Yousi: Problemes de la culture marocaine au XVIIIe siècle[8] was never

translated, but was the principal anchor for Clifford Geertz’s influential Islam Observed.[9] These evocative studies represent the historical and cultural epochs in the twentieth-century Arab world, conveying from various perspectives—Arab nationalist and settler, bourgeois merchant and industrialist and peasant, union militant and religious scholar—how key events and contexts were understood and experienced by those who lived through them.

Berque’s 1981 retirement from the Sorbonne engendered another change of focus. He undertook a translation of the Qur’an into French, published in the immediate aftermath of the Spring 1991 Gulf war and which for this reason generated considerable comment and debate.[10] On the margins of this project Berque completed a complementary study, Relire le Coran,[11] an autobiography[12] and a steady stream of essays and interviews.[13] He was also involved in recent years in projects to improve the education of France’s immigrant population and efforts to improve the understanding of Islam and Muslims in Europe.

Berque’s academic career was marked from the outset by the encouragement he offered Middle Eastern and North African students and colleagues, and by concerted efforts to forge ties with colleagues and students in the United States. His academic appointments in the US included a year-long stay in the mid-1970s at the University of Texas, Austin, and shorter stays elsewhere, including the University of California, Los Angeles. He may have been a scholarly maverick, but his efforts to break down the barriers to international scholarly communication and to facilitate the work of students and colleagues on several continents mean that his influence will be felt for years to come.[14]

[1] Some of major early essays on Morocco, for example, are reprinted in DelEuphratea VAtlas (Paris: Editions Sindbad, 1978).

[2] (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1955).

[3] (Paris and The Hague: Mouton, 1957).

[4] Trans. Jean Stewart (London: Faber and Faber, 1964).

[5] Trans. Jean Stewart (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1967).

[6] Trans. Jean Stewart (London: Faber and Faber, 1972).

[7] Trans. Robert w. Stookey (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1978).

[8] (Paris and The Hague: Mouton, 1958).

[9] Islam Observed: Religious Development in Morocco and Tunisia (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1968).

[10] See Jacques Berque, “Autour d’une traduction du Coran,” Studia Islamica, 74 (1994), 18190.

[11] (Paris: Albin Michel, 1993).

[12] Memoires des deux rives (Paris: Seuil, 1989).

[13] Such as Il reste un avenir: Entretiens avec Jean Sur (Paris: Arlea, 1993).

[14] A complete bibliography of Jacques Berque’s writings will be included in a memorial book that Farouk Mardem-Bey (Institut du Monde Arabe, Paris) is currently editing. As yet untitled, it is scheduled to be published in 1996.

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Professor Lloyd A. Fallers died in Chicago on 4 July 1974 at the age of 48. A member of the editorial board of IJMES, 'Tom', as he was known to nearly all his students and colleagues, had been active in Middle Eastern studies for over a decade after having already distinguished himself through research in East Africa.

Born in Nebraska in 1925, Fallers was both an undergraduate and graduate student at the University of Chicago, where he earned his Ph.D. in Anthropology (1953). After three years at Berkeley and one at Princeton, his teaching career was almost entirely at the University of Chicago, where in 1973 he was named the Albert A. Michelson Distinguished Service Professor of Anthropology and Sociology.

As a student at Chicago, Fallers was strongly influenced by the comparative sociology of Max Weber, long before Weber figured significantly in the teaching of anthropology in the United States or in England. Weber's concern with the development of 'rational' bureaucracy out of traditional forms of domination was central to Fallers' first book, Bantu Bureaucracy (1956) , based on field research among the Basoga of Uganda (1950-1952).

In preparation for this study, Fallers received a Fullbright grant to study at the London School of Economics for a year (1949-1950). The field research itself was funded through a British government fellowship to the East African Institute of Social Research, one of the first awarded to an American for work in an English colony. Subsequent publications based on this research dealt with land tenure (1956), marriage (1957) and law (1969). His interest in comparative patterns of leadership, domination and social inequality led to a later, broader study, in collaboration with other scholars, the results of which were published as The King's Men: Leadership and Status in Buganda on the Eve of Independence (1964). During this study he was also director of the East African Institute of Social Research, the only American ever to hold the post.

Before beginning research on Turkey in the early 1960s, Fallers had been one of the founding members of the University of Chicago's Committee for the Comparative Study of New Nations, together with Clifford Geertz, Edward Shils, David Apter and others. In 1969 he became the Committee's chairman. In logical sequence to his earlier work in East Africa, he became interested in the social anthropology of nation states. In this context, he and his wife Margaret, also a social anthropologist, learned Turkish and undertook fieldwork in Turkey in 1964, in Konya, and again in 1968-1969 in the costal town of Edremit. Illness forced him to cancel a later field trip, but his research objectives had already taken shape.

Foremost among these was his analysis of the conditions under which primordial, class, religious and other loyalties could be superceded by a fragit 'civility' in a nation state, enabling its citizens to assume an unconscious social contract with other members of the polity. Fallers was gifted in his ability to explore such theoretical issues, often dealt with by others in jargon-laden and overly abstracted terms, in the concrete, empirical context of specific social situations.

His Social Anthropology of the Nation State (Aldine, in press), based partly upon his Turkish experience, is a carefully crafted essay on how the systems of meaning which make civility possible in a nation state are socially maintained through the ordinary, daily round of events which its citizens experience and, like many theorists, take for granted. Fallers' sensitively

written 'Notes on an Advent Ramadan' (J. Am. Acad. Re. 42 [1974]: 35-52) deals similarly with variant Turkish understandings of the Islamic tradition and how this tradition is experienced and modified in the daily affairs of a contemporary Turkish community.

The civility which Fallers explored in theory also informed his personal ethic of university life. He was a committed intellectual who saw teaching and openness to colleagues as inherent to his vocation. He was vitally interested in the work of students and colleagues and always willing to engage in patient, Socratic dialogue to help others shape their ideas. So committed was he to this aspect of intellectual life that in addition to research, he continued his teaching in his last years from a wheelchair and on crutches, often at great, although concealed, personal sacrifice. Once, referring to his love of teaching and his ability to stimulate the work of others, he modestly called himself a schoolmaster. His use of the term reinvigorates the calling. His legacy is twofold: his own wide body of scholarship and a decisive influence on the thought and work of students, colleagues and friends.

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